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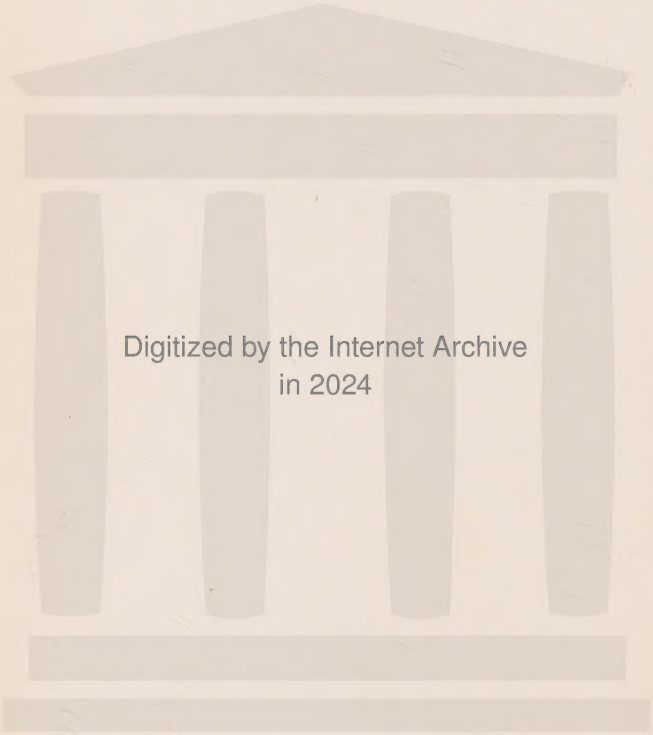
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A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLISH

WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RECENT BOOKS ON THE SUBJECT, AND LISTS OF TEXTS AND EDITIONS

By HENRY CECIL WYLD

AUTHOR OF 'THE HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE MOTHER TONGUE' 'LANCASHIRE PLACE NAMES,' ETC. ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE

IT may seem strange that in a work entitled a History of English, there should be no part dealing specifically with the Vocabulary. On the other hand, it has always seemed to me stranger still that in so many books published in this country, this is practically the only aspect dealt with. The present work was designed as a small book, and in a small book something has to be left out. After carefully thinking over the matter, I decided to leave out Vocabulary altogether, since this has been treated at great length, and very competently, in many other books—those of Dr. Henry Bradley, Professor Skeat, and Professor Jespersen, to mention no more.

This left me more room for a treatment of Sounds and Inflexions. When I considered the text-books in use in England, it seemed that, excellent as many of these are, the phonology, or history of pronunciation, was in none of them dealt with as fully as this rather intricate subject demands. And it is just this aspect which is necessarily the backbone of all serious courses of study, whether in Universities, or among private students who wish to be more than amateurs. In no branch of philological research have such advances been made during the last forty years as in the investigation of the laws of sound change. On no side of the study does the untrained dabbler in Etymology show his incapacity so much, as on questions which demand an exact knowledge of the sound laws of the various dialects of Old and Middle English. But even those who have an elementary working knowledge of the sound changes of Old and Middle English, are often very much at sea when it comes to following the history of English sounds beyond the Middle English

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period. Nor is this not altogether to be wondered at. Many English Universities, until recently at any rate, so framed their courses of study as though English had stopped changing upon the death of Chaucer. Yet the problems connected with the sound changes of the Modern period are, to put it mildly, no less perplexing than those of the earlier periods. During the last few years, in Germany, and in Scandinavia, a large literature has grown up around the history of English sounds from the fifteenth century onwards. Much of this is not easily accessible to the ordinary English student, and the text-books, as a rule, give no hint of its existence, and the young student and the amateur lack the energy or the training to ferret out the facts for themselves in the volumes of Ellis and of Sweet.

Closely associated with the history of sounds during the Modern period, are the problems connected with the rise of Literary English, and of Received Standard Spoken English. These are among the most living questions which are now occupying the attention of students of English, and some attempt is made in the following pages to introduce the reader to the principal questions at issue, and to the special work, nearly all by foreigners, which has recently been published upon these subjects. It is hoped that when the reader of these pages passes to a deeper study of problems which are but indicated here, he may at least feel that he can approach them with some understanding, and with some knowledge of recent results.

In the treatment here given of English inflexions, it will be seen that certain parts of speech are selected, and that they are dealt with at some length. Here again, it seemed better to give special treatment to points which are either omitted or slurred over in other books. It will be found, for instance, I believe, that many of the details here given with regard to the inflexions in the M.E. and Early Mod. periods are not brought together in any other single book. In examination papers for young persons, I have often noticed questions on such points as these, which could only be answered properly after a special investigation. Examiners, I note in passing, seem

to have all sorts of knowledge up their sleeve which neither they nor any one else has ever given to the world at large.

I hope this book may be useful to students of English in our Universities, though I trust it is far removed from being a cram-book. Perhaps the student may learn enough from these pages, on a great number of points, to realize that there is much more to learn concerning both them and other questions which are not dealt with here. The Bibliography and the references in the body of the book, while they make no pretence at completeness, will yet furnish him with information as to where a fuller treatment can be found, and in these special works he will find yet more complete reference to authorities. The idea of confining a young student to one, or for the matter of that, to a dozen text-books, is fatal to sound education after the school stage is passed. The young student ought to feel that in the higher reaches of learning nothing is finally settled once and for all, but that knowledge is for ever progressing. Hence it is essential that he should follow, if but to a slight extent, some of the scientific controversies which, at any given moment, engage the minds of those who are making real contributions to knowledge. He must get away from text-books as soon as possible, or use them but as servants and guides. If he reads some of the journals devoted to his special subject, and this from an early stage in his career, he is brought face to face with the clash of opinions, and feels that he is to some extent in real touch with the making of knowledge, often painfully beaten out, amid strife and dispute. The classified lists of books and monographs in the Bibliography will serve as a guide for the reader, at once to the special researches upon which our present knowledge is based, and to other text-books which deal with aspects of the subject omitted here.

No one will expect to find in each of the three chapters devoted respectively to Old, Middle, and Modern English Phonology the degree of minuteness which would belong, properly, to special grammars of these phases of our language. The student who is particularly interested in any of these will

naturally turn to the pages of Sievers and Bülbring, to Morsbach's *Mittelenglische Grammatik*, still unfortunately incomplete, to the works of Horn and Jespersen, all of which are first-hand and first-rate books.

In the pages of these masters he will find, still in condensed form, but exhaustively treated, fuller information than can be given in such a work as the present, and there too, as well as from the lectures of his own teacher, he will learn where to go for the minute discussion of each problem.

A few words are necessary as to my indebtedness to other writers. I have been helped more in the phonological chapters, and that which deals with the rise of Literary English, than in the rather long chapter on inflexions. Help on general and specific points has, I hope, generally been acknowledged in the text, but there are some names which I must record here with special gratitude. Of these, I am bound to put first that of my revered master Henry Sweet. Apart from his various editions of texts which are indispensable to every one, every student of English turns again and again to his *History of English Sounds*. This book is nearly thirty years old and an enormous amount of work has been done since then. Yet we still feel its wonderful freshness and suggestiveness, the soundness of its plan, the permanence of its contribution to knowledge. Coming to more recent works, I must express my special obligation to Sievers and Bülbring in Old English, to Morsbach, Kluge, ten Brink, and Frieshammer in Middle English, to Luick, Horn, Jespersen, Viëtor, and Zachrisson in the Modern period. I must pay a grateful tribute to the fine monograph of Price on the Ablaut in strong verbs in the period from Caxton to Shakespeare. I owe a great deal to the group of young scholars who during the last few years have supplemented Morsbach's work on the London Dialect, notably Frieshammer, already mentioned, Lekebusch, Dölle, and to the very instructive monograph of Dibelius on John Capgrave, which is really an important treatise on fifteenth-century English.

The republication of a considerable number of the early Grammarians in late years, has made possible a first-hand

reference to many authorities on English Pronunciation which before were chiefly accessible in the monumental work of Ellis.

The great *Historische Grammatik* of Luick, to which every student of English has been looking forward, has just shown in its first part, how brilliant and thorough a treatment we may expect. This part came into my hands when all of my book was written except the last chapter, that on Modern English Sounds, and part of that on Inflexions. It was a source of satisfaction to see that this eminent scholar takes the view which I have always taught, with regard to the fracture of West Germanic *ă* in O.E.

I ought to say perhaps, in justice to myself, and to those who may use this book, that it is not a mere piecing together of materials gathered from older text-books. It may seem ridiculous that such a statement should be necessary, but unfortunately, works on English are not wanting, whose authors have simply decocted the essence of a few of the chief books, including sometimes in a single paragraph of their extract three or four accounts of the same thing given by different writers, without seeing that some of the statements contradicted the others, so that the first half of the pemmican paragraph is at variance with the rest. It is unnecessary to say more than that unless an authority is specifically quoted, the statements in this book are really the result of a personal examination of sources.

Had I had access from the start to a full collection of special investigations on Middle and Early Modern English texts, I should have been spared much labour in hunting through these to discover whether this or that form did or did not occur, and no doubt my statements would in many cases have been more complete. Unfortunately I could not obtain some of the monographs which I required until the work was far advanced ; others I have not been able to see at all.

The Bibliography is fullest in the sections devoted to Middle English and the Modern period, because it seemed that here guidance was most necessary. In the Old English sections, practically no special monographs are recorded, except those on the texts representing the various

Old English dialects. The reason for this is that the special problems connected with Old English are rather remote from a book of this kind, while full bibliographies are easily accessible to advanced students in the grammars of Sievers and Bülbring, though not, unfortunately, in any Old English grammar written in this country.

In giving select lists of Old and Middle English texts, it seemed desirable to indicate the editions, as it is not always easy for a young student to discover this information.

HENRY CECIL WYLD.

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(See also under LONDON DIALECT, &c.)

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(See also the introductions to reprints of the early Grammarians.)

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III.

SELECTED LIST OF WORKS ON ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

Of sixteenth and seventeenth-century books, this list includes only those of which reprints exist. Many of the following have been published in a series entitled *Neudrucke frühneuenglischer Grammatiken*, under the general editorship of Rudolf Brotanek, by Niemeyer, Halle. Those published in this series have an asterisk in front of the author's name.

1530. **Palsgrave, J.** Lesclarcissement de la langue françoise. (Reprinted F. Genin, Paris, 1852.)

1532. **Du Wes, G.** An Introductorie. (Reprinted in Genin's Ed. of Palsgrave.)

1547. **Salesbury, W.** Account of English Pronunciation. (See Ellis's E. E. Pronunciation, 768–87.)

1567. **Salesbury, W.** Account of Welsh Pronunciation. (Ellis's E. E. P. 743–68.)

1568. ***Smith, Sir Thomas.** De Recta et Emendata Linguae Anglicae Scriptione Dialogus. Ed. Deibel, Halle, 1913.

1580. ***Bellot, J.** Le Maistre d'Escole Anglois. Ed. Theo. Spira, Halle, 1912. (See also Zachrisson, English Pronunciation, 1400–1700, pp. 9–16.)

1580. **Bullokar, W.** Booke at large for the amendment of Orthographie for English Speech. Ed. M. Plessow, in Fabeldichtung in England. Palaestra, 52, pp. 237, &c. Berlin, 1906.

1621. **Gill, A.** Logonomia Anglica. Ed. J. Jiriczek, Q. und F. 90, 1903.

1622 and 1633. ***Mason, George.** Grammaire Angloise. Ed. Brotanek, 1905.

1634. ***Butler, Charles.** English Grammar. Ed. A. Eichler, 1910.

1640. ***Daines, Simon.** Orthoepia Anglicana. Ed. Rössler and Brotanek, 1908.

1685. ***Cooper, C.** Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae. Ed. J. D. Jones, 1912.

1701. ***Jones, John.** Practical Phonography. Ed. E. Ekwall, 1907.

1725. **Lediard.** Grammatica Anglicana Critica. (Full account in Ellis, pp. 1040, &c.)

1753. **Bertram, Carl.** The Royal English-Danish Grammar. Copenhagen, 1753.

1801. **Walker, John.** Rhetorical Grammar. (2nd Ed.) 1801.

1809. **Bachelor, T.** Orthoepical Analysis of the Engl. Language.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY. SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

§ 1. THE earliest documentary knowledge of English which we possess consists in a few rather scrappy Charters of the last years of the seventh century and the first few years of the eighth. These Charters are in Latin, but contain English Place and Personal names. (See Sweet's *O.E.T.*, pp. 426, etc., chs. i, ii, iv, and v.)

From the end of the seventh century, then, we can trace the development of English, in various forms or dialects, by means of documents which become increasingly numerous as years go on.

§ 2. During the 1200 odd years over which our knowledge of English extends, changes of very considerable extent have taken place.

To begin with, the spelling of the words is very different in different ages, so much so, that at first sight it is hardly possible to recognize the identity of the present-day forms with those of their ancestors in bygone ages. We attribute these changes in the spelling, on the whole, to an attempt, more or less successful, to adapt this to the changing pronunciation of the different periods.

Again, we find that the vocabulary changes. While many words remain and retain their old meaning, others, which in one age were in common use, disappear altogether, or they alter their meaning; new words come into use and take the place of those which have dropped out of use. We observe that this process of loss and gain and of change of meaning is for ever going on in the English vocabulary.

Nor do grammatical forms or inflexions enjoy immunity from change. Many are lost altogether and their places taken by others which had originally a different function and now have extra work thrown upon them. Other inflexions are simply lost without anything being put in their place, and

without any loss in intelligibility or definiteness of expression. But the ravages made in the inflexional system of English often involve a new form of sentence, a new construction, a new Syntax.

§ 3. All these changes, in Pronunciation, in Vocabulary, in Accidence and Syntax would have to be considered and described in a complete account. The description of these phenomena constitutes the *History of English.*

But the changes referred to do not take place all over the country precisely at the same time, nor in the same way. From the beginning of its career in these islands, English was not a uniform language, but existed in several different forms, or *Dialects.* As time went on this diversity increased, so that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the speech of no two counties was exactly alike, and more or less different forms of English were spoken in different parts of the same county. Some of these differences find utterance in the written language.

§ 4. A complete history of English would take into account all the facts in the development of every form of English from the earliest period till the present day.

It is obvious that such a multitude of facts could not be compressed into the compass of one small volume, but would fill a respectable library of large books.

§ 5. Fortunately, at the present time, the great majority of the English Dialects are of very little importance as representatives of English speech, and for our present purpose we can afford to let them go, except in so far as they throw light upon the growth of those forms of our language which are the main objects of our solicitude, namely, the language of Literature and Received Standard Spoken English.

We shall have a good deal to say later concerning both Literary and Standard Spoken English. It is enough here to say that they are very closely related ; that the origin of both is the same ; that the starting-point was in the language of London as spoken by the Court and the upper ranks of Society, and in the transaction of official business from the fifteenth century. The problem of the history of this form of English is made complex and difficult by the fact that while its features are now, in the main, those of the East Midland type of English, all the other great dialect types have contributed in some degree to its existence.

To understand the rise of Literary and Standard Spoken English, therefore, it is necessary to know something at least

of the early dialects whose elements can be traced, at the present time, in the language of Literature and of polite society.

We narrow down our inquiry, therefore, to the problem of the origin and development of that form of English which is now spoken by educated and well-bred people, and, what is to all intents and purposes the same thing, of that form which is the vehicle of literature, and which for the last four or five centuries has also been that used in the composition of private or public documents, no matter what the native form of speech of the writers might be.

§ 6. [1] After the end of the fourteenth century, the other dialects, excepting always those of Lowland Scotch, gradually cease to be the vehicle of literary expression, and are no longer of importance to us as independent forms of English. We cannot afford, however, to let them altogether out of our sight, because the dialectal composition of the Standard Language varies slightly; it adopts or discards this or that element or feature from time to time for reasons, no doubt mainly social, which we cannot determine with exactitude.

§ 7. In this book, therefore, the modern developments of the provincial English dialects are not considered unless they can throw light on the history of Standard English.

And while we concentrate mainly upon the history of the dominant form of English, and limit our efforts to an attempt to describe the growth of this, we must further, within this field, make a careful choice of material.

While we are bound to take cognizance of many particular and general facts of development in the dialects of Old and Middle English, we must of necessity leave unchronicled many details which are of great interest and importance for the special student of these early periods. We cannot attempt a complete account of Old or Middle English, but must confine ourselves, in the main, to such facts as are of significance for our chief theme, the origin and subsequent development of the dominant dialect which emerges towards the end of the M.E. period.

§ 8. We have already enumerated the various aspects of

[1] This depended, however, largely upon the education of the writer. Thus the Life of S. Editha (Wilts., circa 1420) is written in a very rustic form of English, while the Letters of John Shillingford, a native of Devonshire and Mayor of Exeter, about thirty years later, betray but few typically Southern deviations from London English. (See these Letters, Ed. More, Camden Soc., 1871.)

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English which have to be considered in a complete treatment —its sounds, its vocabulary, its inflexions, and its syntax. Of these, it is perhaps most important to give as clear an account as possible of the development of the sounds and inflexions. The reason of this is, first, that pronunciation and accidence are the most characteristic features of a dialect, and, secondly, that the history of sounds is especially capable of treatment in terms of general laws or tendencies of change.

A couple of examples will serve to make clear the importance of the history of pronunciation in determining the dialectal character. In Standard English we use the form *fire* [faiə]. This is from a M.E. *fīr* and an O.E. *fȳr*. The modern form can only be of either Northern or N. East Midland origin. It can only be derived from the M.E. *fīr*. But other types of this word existed in M.E.—*fuir* [fȳr], the type in use in the West and Central Midlands and in the South and S.West, and *fēr*, the Kentish and South-eastern type. Had these types survived into Mod.Engl., the former would have become **fure* and the latter **fere* [fiə]. Again, take the word *knell*. This goes back to M.E. *knellen* and to O.E. *cnellan*. The type shown in these three forms is S. Eastern or Kentish. The West and Central Midland and Southern type was in O.E. *cnyllan*, M.E. *knullen*, which would develop in Mod. Eng. into **knull*. The corresponding N. East Midland type would result in a Modern **knill*, M.E. *knillen*. These two illustrations are enough to show the importance of pronunciation as a characteristic feature of dialect. Furthermore, the principles, of which these two words are isolated examples, can be formulated in terms of regular laws, which apply to all words containing the same original sounds. The history of sound changes within the various dialects of O. and M.E., therefore, and the development of the sounds through the Modern period, is bound to form an important section in a book dealing with the history of the English Language.

§ 9. The history of English Accidence is partly the history of the treatment of sounds in unstressed syllables, partly also the history of the substitution of one form for another through the influence of the principle known as *Analogy* (see § 70 below).

§ 10. The changes in English Syntax are due partly to the loss of inflexional syllables and the subsequent recasting of the sentence, partly to the influence of Latin and French sentence structure and idiom.

§ 11. Lastly, there is the question of Vocabulary. This is a side of the history of English which requires very judicious handling. Although, for reasons explained in the Preface, this aspect of the history of English is not dealt with here, a few words may be said upon it. It cannot be supposed that in a small book a detailed account of the introduction, origin, and development of meaning of every individual word should be attempted. This would involve, not a statement of general principles, but a series of isolated and disconnected articles. Such work is the business of the lexicographer pure and simple.

It seems better to avoid all treatment of individual words as such, in a history of a language, and in tracing in outline the history of the vocabulary to subordinate everything, as far as possible, to principles, citing words merely as illustrations of these.

Thus it would be quite out of place to give lists of words borrowed from Malay, Chinese, Hungarian, Polish, etc., with any attempt at completeness, because it is far more important to understand how words get from one language into another, and what happens to them, as regards their form, when they do get there, than to have a mechanical knowledge that a particular word was borrowed from some language of which we are entirely ignorant. Any one who knows, say, Greek or Chinese, will have no difficulty in distinguishing the words in English which have been adopted from those languages. Again, it would be improper to take a few hundred native words, haphazard, and describe with minuteness the changes in meaning, perhaps very considerable, which they have undergone, unless the principles of change in meaning, so far as these can be brought under a generalized statement, are first explained, and the particular words cited, merely to illustrate the principle.

The same view applies to the method of dealing with loan-words in a short history of a language. It is important and necessary to state what are the principal languages which have contributed to the English vocabulary, how and when the speakers of these languages came in contact with the English, what classes of words we acquired from the various sources, and the history of the external form of the words when once they had become part and parcel of English speech. Armed with these general points, each of which should have been sufficiently illustrated by specific examples, the student will be in a position to discover for himself the sources of many of the principal foreign loan-words, and if he is in doubt, as indeed

any one may be, on such a point, there are the Etymological Dictionaries to settle the point for him.

§ **12.** It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the study of the history of English in such a book as this, or in a hundred others, many of which may be larger and better, is a barren and lifeless pursuit if divorced from the study of the language itself as it exists in the actual documents of the different periods. If we would feel and realize the drama of linguistic evolution, we must penetrate by patient study into the spirit and life of the language at each period —a long and slow process—and then, when we can 'look before and after', we shall gradually gain a sense of growth and development. No statistical and descriptive account can give this vital knowledge, no amount of laws, and tables, and paradigms. All that the best history of English ever written can do for the student is to act as a guide to the path which he must tread anew for himself.

There is a real danger at the present time for the student of English in the very multiplicity which exists of grammars, histories of the language, monographs on minute points of phonology and syntax, and 'aids to study' of all kinds, a danger that the weary pilgrim will never reach his goal—namely, a first-hand knowledge of the language itself as it exists in the literature. It is to be feared that the formidable and ever-increasing array of books and articles *about* English make it, in some ways, more and more difficult to get to the reality. The only means of salvation lies in a constant reference, on the one hand, to the actual texts, and, on the other, to the living spoken English of to-day, in which the great impulses of change are ever at work, and where we can observe history being made under our very eyes.

For we must never forget that while, from the nature of the case, the past history of a language must necessarily be traced by means of written records, these are to be regarded as affording us merely an indication of what was actually taking place in the spoken language itself. Change in language implies a change in the mental and physical habits of the living human beings who speak the language. The drama of linguistic history is enacted, not in manuscripts nor inscriptions, but in the mouths and minds of men.

CHAPTER II

POSITION OF ENGLISH AMONG LANGUAGES. DIALECTAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL DIVISIONS

§ 13. ENGLISH was introduced into these islands in the fifth century by Germanic tribes who came, in the first instance, under colour of helping Vortigern, the British king, against the Picts. But soon, seeing the 'nothingness of the Britons, and the excellence of the land', the Jutes, who were the first comers, sent for their kinsmen, who, coming in large numbers, murdered and pillaged their way to the possession of the best part of the country, causing the Britons to flee before them 'like fire' into the mountains of the west.

In about a century, the various tribes had settled down, and the thoroughness of their grip on the country may be gauged from the purely English character of most names of places in the South and Midlands, except of course those on the borders of Wales and in Cornwall.

The principal tribes were the Jutes, the Angles, and Saxons, who came respectively from Jutland, Schleswig, and Holstein.

The Jutes settled Kent, perhaps part of Surrey, part of Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight. The various tribes of Saxons took possession of the rest of the South and West, between the Thames and the Humber. The Angles settled in the North and Midlands.

§ 14. But if the Germanic invaders of Britain were in many respects savages, they were also noble savages, and in their character lay the seeds of much that was worthy and admirable.

In the oldest fragments of heathen poetry, side by side with the fierceness and cruelty which we expect, there are also displayed the excellent qualities of high courage, loyalty to a leader or a cause, a tenderness and a love of nature which spring from what ten Brink calls the 'pious soul of English heathendom'. The pirate who in the fifth century put forth 'through the mists of ocean' to seek his fortune in an unknown

land, and to face, undaunted, risks and dangers, first among the stormy waves, and then amid strange peoples, far from 'his home where he was reared', may have been bloodthirsty and unscrupulous, but he was certainly neither ignoble in spirit nor contemptible as a man. His descendants, turned farmers, country gentlemen, devotees of the chase, peaceful rulers in their district, protectors of their households, faithful servants of their chief or king, had time and opportunity to cultivate the gentler virtues. But their swords, meanwhile, were not allowed to rust; there was plenty of fighting during the first few centuries of the English settlement. The introduction of Christianity, while it gave a sanction to the innate qualities of altruism, faithfulness unto death, and deep-rooted tenderness which reside in the Germanic peoples, did not destroy, but merely disciplined, and gave a nobler and better controlled direction to the sterner elements in the national character. In Beowulf, the ideal king and warrior of Germanic heathen chivalry, we find essentially the same character and virtues as in Alfred, the Christian monarch and soldier, than whom no nobler figure is to be found in the annals of any nation.

§ **15.** Throughout Old English history and literature there appears the expression of a national character, in which what are often regarded as chiefly heathen elements are inextricably blended with the gentler and sweeter qualities that find their natural incentive in Christianity. Thus it is a very superficial criticism which would divide our old poetry into the National (meaning thereby purely heathen) and the Christian, for there is no fundamental difference of spirit between them—both are equally 'national'. Different aspects of the national genius are indeed emphasized in the poetry of heathen and Christian periods, but all the elements and spirit of each are found in both; there is no sudden break, no new departure. As we turn over the pages of the History of the Church in England, we are struck with something like amazement that such an engaging personality as that of St. Bede, with his serene and lofty outlook upon the world, his tenderness and pathos, his sound historical method, his captivating gift of narrative, his profound piety, could emerge from a people separated by but three generations from heathenism, and by less than three centuries from the ruthless followers of Hengest. From these rude ancestors were to spring, in the course of a few centuries, a long and splendid line of kings, rulers, warriors, and legislators; of poets, mystics, and scholars; of bishops, saints, and martyrs, whom no Englishman of to-day can look back

upon without a glow of pride at the thought that he belongs to the same race.

§ 16. The Dialects of Old English.

The language of the Germanic invaders, which in the earliest times can have been but slightly differentiated, had become split up, in the age of the earliest documents, into four still very similar, but nevertheless quite definitely marked dialects. We distinguish the Saxon dialects, the Kentish dialect (that of the Jutes), and the Anglian dialects. Anglian is divided into Northumbrian, the speech of the Angles North of the Humber, and Mercian, that of the Angles of the Midlands. Mercian and Northumbrian, while having several features in common which distinguish them from the Saxon and Kentish dialects, are also characterized severally by distinctive marks. Thus while we can often speak of a characteristic simply as Anglian, we have also to observe carefully the points in which Mercian and Northumbrian differ. We unfortunately know nothing of the early form of the East Anglian dialect.

Of the Saxon dialects, the most important by far is that of Wessex, which we refer to as West Saxon. This form of English is much more fully represented in literature than any other of the early dialects. In fact West Saxon was the nearest approach to a standard literary dialect which existed in Old English. Its prestige gave it currency beyond the bounds of a single province. This is the dialect which is studied first by students of the old language, and indeed there is little to read, and nothing worthy the name of *literature*, in prose, in any other form of Old English, except some interesting homilies in a dialect which it is now the fashion to refer to as a Saxon Patois. Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian are mainly known to us in Charters, Glossaries, in Glosses, or in paraphrases of the Gospels and the Psalms.

A very curious and interesting form of Old English is the Saxon Patois of the Blickling Homilies, and of what are known as the Harleian Glosses, which will be referred to more particularly later on. The view now held is that these are indeed in a Saxon dialect, which has many features in common with the West Saxon literary language of Alfred and Ælfric, while it also shows well-marked deviations that rather resemble Mercian in some respects. It is believed that this dialect developed within the Saxon area, and that it is not due to actual contamination from without. Unfortu-

nately we do not know precisely in what part of the Saxon area this *Patois* was spoken.

§ 17. The Name of the People and their Language.

The country as a whole is called by our ancestors *Englalond*, 'land of the Angles'; the people, unless some specific tribe is designated, are called *Angel cynn*, 'Angle kin', and the language is known as *Englisc*. Bede uses the expression *Angli sive Saxones*, implying that both terms mean the same thing, but he generally calls the people *Angli*, and their language *Sermo Anglicus*, as a generic term, even when referring to the language of the Jutes.

The great and good Alfred, King of the West Saxons, the founder of West Saxon prose, calls his own language *Englisc*, and Ethelbert of Kent, the first English Christian King, applies the word *Angli* to himself and his people. Much later, the Abbot Ælfric, who wrote pure West Saxon, speaks of turning his Homilies *of Ledenum ġereorde to Englisċre spræċe*, 'from the Latin language into English speech'. *Lingua Saxonica*, *Saxonice* are but rarely used, unless in specific reference to the Saxon dialects. The expression *Anglo-Saxon* seems to have been coined in the eighteenth century, and is now less and less used among scholars. It is better to follow ancient precedent in this matter, and to call the language of the oldest periods *Old English*. We speak of this or that dialect of Old English, and also of Old Kentish, Old Mercian, etc.

§ 18. Relation of the O.E. Dialects to other Languages.

Old English belongs to the West Germanic branch of Germanic speech. Parent, or Primitive Germanic, was divided into three great branches: North Germanic, represented by the Scandinavian languages; East Germanic, represented chiefly by Gothic; and West Germanic. The principal divisions of the latter are Old Saxon, Old Frisian, Old English, and the Old High German dialects. Of these, Old Saxon and Old Frisian are most nearly related to English, the latter indeed having so many characteristics in common with O.E. that many scholars are inclined to assume an original unity which they call Anglo-Frisian, and suppose to have differentiated subsequently into Old English on one hand, and Old Frisian on the other. This assumption, however, is open to many criticisms into which we need not now enter.

The Old High German dialects underwent in the sixth

century certain considerable changes in the original consonantal sounds, changes which we now find reflected in Modern German. On the other hand, Old High German adheres far more closely to the ancestral system of vowel sounds than any other West Germanic dialect, and also retains the original inflexions with remarkable fidelity.

By the help of Old Saxon and Old High German, both of which are in many respects nearer to the primitive West Germanic type than O.E., at the time of the oldest documents, we are able to form a very fair idea of a form of O.E. earlier than any which we find recorded, and also to reconstruct West Germanic itself. If we find a feature preserved only in O.H.G. among W. Gmc. dialects, but occurring also in Gothic, and perhaps in Nth. Gmc. as well, we are pretty safe in assuming that it was not only a West Germanic feature, but had survived from Primitive Gmc. itself. Such a feature is, for example, the survival of the old diphthong *ai* in O.H.G. (written *ai*, *ei*) as in *stein* 'stone', which in Goth. is *stains*, and in Old Norse *steinn*. We have no doubt that this was a West Gmc. sound, though O.E., O.Sax., and O.Fris. have all lost it.

§ 19. The Chronological Divisions of English.

If we bear in mind that language changes gradually, and that it is perpetually changing, it will be evident that it is impossible to define with precision the exact date at which a language passes out of one stage and enters upon a new era of its existence. The process is a continuous one, and one period passes by insensible gradations into another. At any given moment there exist side by side with young speakers, whose language represents the 'latest thing' in speech development, an old generation who still represent an order of things which has passed away except in the speech of themselves and their exact contemporaries, and also an intermediate generation whose speech shows some characteristics both of the new and the old.

It is nevertheless the case, that round about a particular period of time, we can observe certain tendencies arising, and gaining ground as time goes on. We are thus able to mark off the course of any language whose records cover a considerable extent of time into more or less rough chronological divisions, each of which has definite features which distinguish it from what is before and after.

From this point of view, and for the sake of convenience,

we make the following more or less rough and approximate chronological divisions of English:

Old English
- Earliest O.E. End of seventh century.
- Early O.E. Eighth and ninth centuries.
- Late O.E. From beginning of tenth century to about 1050.

Early Transition English. From 1050–1150.

Middle English
- Early M.E. 1150–1250.
- Central M.E. 1250–1370.
- Late M.E. 1370–1450.

Transition Period. 1400 or 1450–1500.

Modern English
- First Modern. 1500–1600.
- Second Modern. Seventeenth century.
- Third Modern. Eighteenth century.
- Present-day. From 1800–

Such divisions as these are necessarily arbitrary, and will largely depend upon what features are selected as distinguishing tests. Some will prefer to consider the Modern period as beginning about 1450, and will apply the term Early Modern to English as it existed between this date and the middle of the following century.

CHAPTER III

THE SOUNDS OF SPEECH

§ **20.** It is not proposed to give here an elaborate treatise on Phonetics, but as Sounds are the realities of Speech, and as much confusion of thought often prevails concerning the nature and mode of formation of these, it seems desirable to include a few remarks concerning them.

In the first place it is important to use a clear terminology, and to use it consistently. A good phonetic terminology is one which expresses briefly, and unambiguously, the facts of utterance.

As experience has convinced the present writer that Sweet's method of classifying and describing sounds is the most exact and adequate, it will be employed throughout this chapter, and generally in this book.

Note. Symbols placed in brackets, as [þ], are phonetic symbols, which will be used in this work when necessary.

§ 21. Voice and Breath.

A very important organ of speech is the Glottis, which contains two membranes capable of vibration, and known as the vocal chords. When the vocal chords are drawn across the Glottis, so as to close it, the air when driven from the lungs passes in a series of puffs through the chords, and makes them vibrate. This vibration causes a buzzing sound, which is known as *Voice*. Sounds which are accompanied by this vibration are known as Voiced Sounds. If, on the other hand, the vocal chords are not drawn tight, but lie folded back against the walls of the Glottis, the air passes through the throat without any hindrance, there is no vibration of the chords, no Voice. Sounds produced under these conditions, and without any vibration of the Chords, are called Voiceless, Un-voiced, or *Breath* sounds.

Examples of Voiced Sounds are the consonants *z* as in *buzz*, *v* as in *vice*, and the *th* [ð] in *this*. Vowels, as their name implies, are usually voiced in nearly all languages.

Examples of Voiceless, or Breath Sounds, are *s* in *sit*, *f* in *fat*, and the *th* [þ] in *think*.

§ 22. **Consonants and Vowels.**

The fundamental difference between Consonants and Vowels depends upon the degree of opening of the *Mouth Passage*.

Thus in a Consonant the mouth passage is either *completely stopped* for a moment, as in [p, t, k], or sufficiently closed or narrowed to produce a perceptible friction, as in [f], *sh* [ʃ] in *ship*, or *th* [þ] in *thin*.

In forming vowel sounds, on the other hand, the passage is never narrow enough to cause friction when the air-stream passes through. This can be realized at once if we compare the consonant [v] with the first vowel in *father* [ā].

Consonants formed by a momentary closing or *stopping* of the air-passage, as in [p, t, k], are called **Stops,** or **Stop-consonants**; those formed by merely narrowing the passage and causing friction [f, þ, ʃ] are called **Open Consonants,** or by some writers **Continuants.**

§ 23. **Classification of Consonants.**

There are three points to be observed in describing a Consonant sound: **Where is it made? How is it made? Is it voiced or not?**

§ 24. **The Question 'Where?'**

Consonantal articulation, that is, the production either of Stops, or Open Consonants, may take place in the Throat, or in the Mouth Passage. Throat open consonants occur in Arabic, and a Throat Stop (Glottal Stop) occurs in Danish, and, in a milder form, in German, and in several forms of Scots, but as a rule the consonants of the European languages are formed in the mouth. This being so, it is better to discard altogether the misleading term *Guttural* in dealing with the sounds of English and other European languages.

The majority of the Consonants formed in the mouth are made by different parts of the tongue; some are made by the lips, and some by the combined activities of tongue and lips. In addition to these organs, the soft palate or Velum, and the Uvula also function, the former functioning together with the tongue in forming back consonants: stops, open, nasals, etc., the latter vibrating against the tongue in the back trills.

§ 25. **Consonants made with the Tongue.**

It is possible to form consonants with every part of the upper surface of the Tongue, along its whole length from

the Root to the Point or tip. It is important to map out roughly the chief characteristic areas of the tongue, since each of these forms a typical kind of consonant sound. Starting at the *Back* and working forward, we have the following areas: *Back*; *Front* (or Middle of the tongue); *Blade* (the area just behind the *Point*); the *Point* itself.

As a rule, a consonant is formed between the tongue and that part of the roof of the mouth immediately above the tongue area which is being used.

§ 26. Back Consonants.

Typical sounds of this class are [k, g], *back voiceless*, and *back voiced stops* respectively. This is the class often unfortunately called *Gutturals*, a misleading and meaningless term in this connexion, because they are not formed in the *Throat* at all, but between the *Back of the tongue* and the *Soft Palate*.

Note that *Back Consonants* may be made with the *Root* (Root Cons.); by the part just in front of the Root (Full Back); or slightly further forward (Back Advanced). The Back area is, however, perfectly definite in extent, and if we try to form [k] or [g] first with the Root, and then further and further forward, we shall find there is a limit which we cannot pass without the resulting sound ceasing to be a typical *Back* [k] or [g] stop, and becoming something quite different. The *Full Back* stop is heard in the English *cart*, *cup*; the *Back Advanced* in *keep*, *kit*. The reason for this difference will be apparent later, when we deal with the articulation of vowel sounds.

§ 27. Front Consonants.

This class of sounds, made with the *Middle* or *Front* of the tongue, is exceedingly important in the History of English, and unfortunately its character is often misunderstood. Much of the confusion of mind which prevails concerning *Front* consonants arises from the misleading and vague term *Palatal* which is often applied to them. The word ought to be banished from the vocabulary of scientific students of language because it has no meaning. If *Palatal* means 'formed with the roof of the mouth', then it may be said that all consonants made by the tongue are formed between this and some part of the roof of the mouth; if it be argued that the term refers only to the *Hard Palate*, then the reply is that in that case it would apply also to a totally different class, the *Blade* consonants. The important thing is to know *what part of the tongue* is being used in forming a given consonant. We therefore shall do well to get rid for ever of this unmeaning term.

We have only one *Front Consonant* in Modern English,

namely the *Front Open Voiced* which we write *y*, as in *you, yacht.* The symbol generally used for this is [j]. In German not only this sound exists, as in *jung*, *Jahr*, but also the voiceless form of it, as in *ich* [ij]. The student should make a point of realizing, by practice, when he is using the *Front* area of the tongue, and should then proceed to form a Stop Consonant, both Breath and Voiced, with the same part of the tongue. The *Front Stops* undoubtedly existed for a time in Old English. The effect on the ear of a voiceless front stop is that of a peculiar kind of [t], that of the voiced front stop, of a peculiar kind of [d]. For this reason we denote these sounds by the symbols [ṫ] and [ḋ] respectively.

It should be noted that when we pronounce a *Front Consonant*, the tongue is drawn up so that the *Middle* is brought into play, and the *Point* is curled round and down, so that it lies in the cavity below and behind the lower front teeth. If the Point is in any other position than this we may be sure that we are not pronouncing a *Front Consonant* at all. Unless the theory and practice of this class of sounds be well understood, a great deal that is written about 'Palatalization' is entirely devoid of meaning. Students must take the trouble to learn this, to most Englishmen and Germans, entirely new class of Stops. *Front Stops* occur in Russ. дядя [ḋáḋa] and in Swedish *kenna* [ṫénna]; *Front Divided* in Italian *voglio* [vɔ̃·lo]; *Front Nasal* in French *montagne* [mɔ̃taṅ], Ital. *vergogna* [vɛrgóṅa].

§ 28. Blade Consonants.

To this class belong [s] and [z]. These are really the only members of the group which concern us much, though in Modern English it is probable that some speakers use *Blade Stops* instead of the ordinary *Point Stops*, especially before [ʃ, ž] in the combinations [tʃ] and [dž] in *hitch, bridge* respectively.

§ 29. Blade Point Consonants.

The typical *Blade Point* Consonants are *sh* [ʃ], as in *ship, schön, cher*, and the initial consonant in French *jamais* [ž], the final in *rouge*, the medial consonant in *pleasure* [plɛžə]. While we have both the Voiced and Voiceless *Blade Point Open* consonants in English and French, in German only the voiceless [ʃ] exists, [ž] being often very difficult for German speakers to acquire.

In articulating this class of sounds, the *Blade* is raised, the

tongue is slightly retracted, and the *Point* is turned upwards and backwards. The air-stream has to pass over both *Blade* and *Point*.

§ 30. Point Consonants.

These are often loosely called 'Dentals', a term which is not applicable to English [d] and [t], in which the Point does not touch the teeth, but forms a stop against the upper gums or *Alveolars* just behind the teeth. Thus the English *Point Consonants* [t] and [d] may be called *Point Alveolars* if it is desired to be very exact. As a matter of fact the difference between point-teeth [t] and point-alveolar [t] is hardly perceptible to the ear. In German and French [t] and [d] are genuine *Point-Teeth* consonants, or '*Dentals*'.

§ 31. Point-Teeth Consonants.

The only *Point Consonants* which are articulated against the upper teeth in English are the *Point-Teeth Open* consonants, [ð] as in *this*, and [þ] as in *think*. The difficulty which foreigners sometimes find in pronouncing these sounds is largely imaginary. The way to obtain them is to pronounce the P.-T. Stops, and then relax the pressure against the teeth, so that the air-stream can pass through with the characteristic hiss or buzz of this class of sounds. In English, some speakers form [þ, ð] merely by putting the point of the tongue lightly *against* the upper teeth, other speakers allow the point to protrude slightly between the upper and lower teeth.

§ 32. Lip Consonants.

These are made by the activity of both lips. The Stops [b] and [p] are typical examples of this class, and need no comment.

§ 33. Lip-Teeth Consonants.

These are made by bringing the lower lip against the upper teeth, and allowing the air-stream to pass between the narrow passage thus formed. The Open consonants of this group, [f] and [v], exist in most European languages.

§ 34. Lip-Back Consonants.

The *Lip-Back Open* are the sounds which concern us. These are the English [w], and [ẅ] or Voiceless [w] written *wh*, as in *which*. These sounds are made by bringing the lips fairly close together, so that a slight consonantal friction is caused when the air-stream passes, and at the same time

raising the *Back* of the tongue. English [w] is a very important sound, not merely because of its occurrence in Modern English, but because it is one of the oldest sounds in the language. It has remained unchanged, apparently, not merely since the West Germanic and Primitive Germanic periods, but even from the Primitive Aryan mother-tongue.

Voiceless [w], or [ʍ] occurs invariably in those words which are written with initial *wh* (except *who*, *whole*, and one or two more), in the pronunciation of Scotch and Irish speakers. Many English people, even in the South, now use this sound, but it is certainly not natural in English speech from the Midlands downwards, and has been introduced comparatively recently—within the last thirty or forty years—apparently through Scotch and Irish influence, backed up by the spelling. Many excellent speakers of Standard English never use the sound at all.

§ 35. Lip-Front Consonants.

These are formed, as regards their consonantal element, entirely with the lips, but with the activity of the latter is combined the raising of the *Front* of the tongue. The *Voiced Lip-Front Open* [β] occurs in French *huit* [βit], etc., and the voiceless [ɸ] in the same language, when *ui* is written, after a voiceless consonant, especially an Open voiceless, as in *fuite* [fɸit].

§ 36. The Question 'How?' Consonants are formed.

Besides knowing the area in the mouth at which consonants are formed, it is necessary to know also *how* the active part is being used.

We distinguish five *modes* of forming consonantal sounds: *Stops*, and *Open Consonants*—already described, *Divided* articulation, *Nasalization*, and *Trilling*.

Some areas of the tongue, e.g. the *Back* and the *Point*, can be used in all these ways.

NOTE. A trill is made either *with* the point of the tongue, or *against* the back of the tongue, *with* the uvula.

§ 37. Divided Consonants.

These are what are popularly called 'l'-sounds. They are made by forming a complete contact between some part of the tongue and the corresponding area of the palate or the teeth, while at the same time the edges or sides of the tongue are allowed to sink slightly, so that the air-stream can pass *on either side* of the point of contact. Thus the English and German [l] sounds are made with the *Point* of the tongue.

There is a complete stoppage at one place, but on either side of this there is an opening through which the air-stream passes. Thus the *Divided Consonants* have something in common both with *Stops* and *Open Consonants*, since there is complete contact at one point, but also there is an open passage so that the sound can be prolonged. The same mode is practicable with the back of the tongue. The *Back Divided* [l̠] is heard in Russian, e.g. in былъ. In English, [l] is unvoiced after a voiceless consonant, as in *fling*, where [l] begins unvoiced, and is then voiced. In French *souffle* [sūfl̥] the [l] is unvoiced altogether.

§ 38. Nasal Consonants.

Nasalization is produced by opening the passage which leads from the throat to the *Nose*, so that the air-stream passes through the latter.

Any consonant may be nasalized, that is, the nose passage may be open, no matter what activities are going on in the mouth passage. At the same time, in most civilized European languages, the nasalization of consonants is confined to stops. The chief characteristic nasals are [n] *Point-nasal*; [ŋ] *Back-nasal*, as in *sing* [siŋ]; *Lip-nasal* [m], *limb* [lim]. We might say with perfect accuracy that [n] was a nasalized [d]; [ŋ] a nasalized [g]; and [m] a nasalized [b]. The student may practise passing from [g] to [ŋ], [d] to [n], etc., by the simple process of opening the nose passage, without releasing the stop.

In some languages, voiceless nasals occur, but they are not very common. Thus in French *rhumatisme* is often pronounced [rəmatism̥] but also [rəmatizm(ə)].

§ 39. Trills.

These sounds are popularly known as the 'r'-sounds. The two chief, if not the only *Trills*, are the *Point-Trill* [r], and the *Back-Trill* [ʁ]. The former, which is heard among Scotch speakers, and probably occurred in Old and Middle English generally, is made by the rapid vibration of the *Point* of the tongue just behind the upper teeth. The latter, often heard in French, is produced by retracting the tongue, raising the Back of this organ, and allowing the *Uvula* to vibrate upon the raised surface.

Modern English [r] is not really a *Trill* at all, but merely a very weak *Point Open* consonant. The *r*-sounds, both in French and English, are unvoiced after voiceless consonants.

§ 40. The meaning of the third point to be considered in describing consonants, whether they are voiced or not, has already been explained (§ 21).

§ 41. If we combine the three points just discussed, we get the following table of consonant sounds:

	Back.		Front.		Blade.		Blade-point.		Point.		Lip.		Lip-teeth		Lip-back.		Lip-front.	
	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B	V.	B.	V.
Open	χ	ɣ	j̥	j	s	z	ʃ	ž	þ	ð	p	b	f	v	w̥	w	ɸ	β
Stop	k	g	ẗ	d̈					t	d	p	b						
Divided	ɬ̥	ɬ	l̥̈	l̈					l̥	l								
Nasal	ŋ̊	ŋ	n̥̈	n̈					n̥	n	m̥	m						
Trill	ʀ̥	ʀ							r̥	r								

NOTE. The Blade and Blade-point stops, Divideds, and Nasals are omitted from this Table because they occur as a rule only in combination with [ʃ, ž, s, z]. Some speakers no doubt tend to assimilate [t] to [ʃ] in [tʃ], but it is unnecessary for our present purposes to distinguish these sounds by special symbols.

§ 42. General Remarks upon the Consonants.

In order to realize the precise nature of each consonant, and the organic relation of one group to another, as well as of the individual sounds in each group, it is desirable to practise various exercises.

The student should practise in the first place the art of *Voicing* and *Unvoicing*, that is of alternately closing and opening the vocal chords without altering the position of the organs of the mouth.

The Open Consonants, Divided, and Nasals are the best for this purpose, as they can be prolonged: [s—z, þ—ð, ʃ—ž, j̥—j], etc. Another exercise is nasalizing and de-nasalizing. Thus the process of opening and closing the nose passage should be practised by passing from [g] to [ŋ] and vice versa, and the same exercise should be tried with [b—m, d—n].

It is well to practise the consonants in organically related groups; all the *point*, all the *back*, all the *front* consonants in order. While it is highly desirable to learn to isolate sounds, and to pronounce consonants by themselves, it is useful also to add the vowel [ā] in pronouncing a consonant, thus—[ðā, dā, nā, lā, rā], and so on with the consonants of each group.

It is particularly instructive to pass from Stop to Open, from Open to Stop of each group, gradually opening the Stop until the Open is fully formed. Besides practising the sounds in this vertical order, it is also an excellent thing to start with a *back* consonant, and shift the place of articulation gradually forward, until the *point* of the tongue is reached: [gā, ġā, d̈ā, dā] and so on. Practise this also with the *Open, Divided, Nasal,* and *Trill,* both *Voiced* and *un-Voiced.*

These exercises are all of them important for the student of the history of a language, because they illustrate the various possible changes in articulation which occur from time to time during the life of a language. A thorough mastery of these processes makes the history of a language more of a reality, and enables the student to get away from graphic formulae. Thus in stating Verner's Law [see Note 2 following § 346] it is essential to think in terms of sounds rather than of symbols, and to be able to say that under such and such conditions the Germanic *Voiceless Open Consonants,* derived from the corresponding Aryan or Indo-Germanic *Voiceless Stops,* were voiced, rather than to think of the process in terms of a graphic formula and to say that *p, t, k* which had become *f, þ, χ,* under the conditions stated by Verner then became *b̌, ð, g̊.*

§ 43. The Classification of Vowel Sounds.

There are four points which must be considered in describing and classifying a *Vowel Sound*: the *Height of the Tongue*; the *Part of the Tongue used*; the *Condition of the Tongue*; the **Participation or non-Participation of the Lips.**

§ 44. The Height of the Tongue.

The Tongue can be raised or lowered in the mouth, and these movements correspond to the movements of the lower jaw. We distinguish three degrees of *Height*: *High, Mid,* and *Low.* In the *High* position the tongue is usually raised as high as is consistent with the absence of friction. Thus in [i] as in *beat, viel, si,* the tongue is practically as high as is possible without passing into a consonantal sound. If the tongue be raised but very little from the position which it occupies in [i] it soon ceases to be a vowel, and becomes [j]. The *Mid* position is that which the tongue occupies when it is in the middle of the mouth. The *Low* position involves a still greater lowering of the tongue and sinking of the lower jaw, so that the mouth is, comparatively speaking, fairly wide open. The three degrees of height are illustrated in the

three English words [bi̯t, bɛt, bæt] which in the Standard pronunciation are *High*, *Mid*, and *Low*, respectively. It is important to learn to realize the upward and downward movements of the tongue, and the student may learn a great deal at the beginning by merely deliberately moving the tongue up and down silently and without attempting to utter any particular sound.

§ 45. The Part of the Tongue Used.

The tongue may be drawn back in the mouth, so that the *back* part comes into play; it may be advanced, so that the *front* comes into play; or it may lie practically *flat* in the mouth, so that its whole upper surface is used.

Vowels made with the *Back* of the tongue are called *back vowels*; those made with the *Front* are *front vowels*; those with the whole surface are known as *flat vowels*.

NOTE. Sweet, whose classification is here used, describes the last class as *Mixed Vowels*. The term *Flat* is used in this book, as less likely to lead to confusion, and as being more descriptive of the facts.

Examples of *back vowels* are [ɑ̄] as in *father*, *Bahn*, etc.; [ɔ] as in English *saw*.

Front vowels are heard in the English words *bet*, *bat*, French *si*, *dé*, and in German *Vieh*, *lehnen*, etc.

Flat vowels do not occur in French, but a typical English sound occurring in *heard*, *worm*, *curl* [hɅ̄d, wɅ̄m, kɅ̄l] belongs to this group, as does the common unstressed vowel [ə], as in *butter* [batə], *Wordsworth* [wɅ̄dzwəþ]. A *flat vowel* is also heard in German in the unstressed syllables of *Vater*, *Knabe*, etc.

NOTE. In *back* vowels the tongue *slopes* down from *back* to *front*; in *front* vowels, from *front* to *back*. These two classes are sometimes called *sloped* vowels. In the *flat* vowels there is no *slope*, hence the name.

§ 46. The Condition of the Tongue.

The condition referred to is the muscular condition, which may be one of *Tenseness*, in which the tongue is braced and hard, or, on the other hand, one of *Slackness*, in which the tongue is relatively soft and slack. Vowels uttered with the tongue *tense* have a clearer, shriller sound, and a higher pitch, than those uttered with the tongue *slack*. We call the former *tense* vowels, the latter, *slack* vowels.

NOTE. Sweet uses the term *Narrow* for *tense* vowels, and *Wide* for *slack*. *Tense* and *Slack* are used here, after the example of many phoneticians, as being more definitely descriptive of the facts, and less likely to give rise to misapprehensions.

The essential and characteristic difference between *tense* and *slack* vowels may be heard by contrasting the *mid-front-tense* [e], as in French *dé*, or German *Weh*, with the *mid-front-slack* vowel [ɛ], as in English *head*, *pen*, or German *fett*, *hell*, etc. The student should also attempt to distinguish between the different muscular sensations felt in pronouncing alternately [e] and [ɛ].

§ **47.** It is rather important to warn students against confusing *Tenseness* with *Height*, as is done by the ambiguous terminology too frequently used. Thus when a writer talks of an '*Open Vowel*', and a '*Close Vowel*', it is never quite clear what he means. For some writers call [ɛ] '*open e*' (German 'offenes *e*'), as distinct from [e] which they call '*close e*'. Here the real distinction is *purely one of Tenseness*, and not of *Height* at all. But the same writers also refer to [ɔ̄], as in English *saw*, as '*open o*', as distinct from [o] in French *beau* or German *Lohn*. Here the distinction *is* definitely one of *Height*; [o] being *mid-back-tense*, and [ɔ] *low-back-tense*.

There is no necessary connexion between *Height* and *Tenseness*. There are two distinct series of vowels, one made with a tense tongue, the other with a slack, but differing in no other particular. Thus, if we take the *Front* vowels, we can pronounce *High*, *Mid*, and *Low Tense*, and also vowels in the same three positions *Slack*. It is a mistake to suppose, as some writers appear to suggest, that in passing from the *High Tense* to the *Low Tense*, it is necessary to pass through several *slack* stages. If, for instance, the tongue be slightly lowered from the *High Tense*, we do *not* get a *Slack* vowel, but merely a lowered *Tense* vowel, unless, of course, the tongue be deliberately slackened, which is not at all necessary. A *mid-tense* vowel is not *higher* than a *mid-slack* in the sense that the whole tongue is raised. It is true, however, that when the tongue is made taut, the upper surface, or part of it, stands up rather more than when the tongue is slack and soft. In the same way we can raise our arm to a certain position, and while neither raising it nor lowering it, we can either make the muscles stand out in lumps, or allow them to lie soft and unstrained. But unless we deliberately choose to do so, we do not raise the arm when we stiffen the muscles.

All this, like any other fact in phonetics, the student must bring to the test of his own experience.

§ 48. The Activity of the Lips.

In pronouncing a vowel sound the lips may either be passive, or, in some cases, drawn right back from the teeth (spreading), or they may be slightly protruded, so that they take part in the articulation, and modify the sound uttered. Vowels in whose formation the lips take part are called *Rounded* vowels; those in whose formation the lips take no part are called *Unrounded.* In describing a vowel of the latter sort, the term *Unrounded* need not be used, as it is assumed that if no mention is made of *Rounding* this is absent. Examples of *Rounded* vowels are : [y] as in French *but* [byt], which is *high-front-tense-round*; [ʚ] as in German *schön—mid-front-tense-round*; [u] as in English *boot* [būt]—*high-back-tense-round*; [o] as in German *Bohne* [bōnë] or French *beau* [bo]—*mid-back-tense-round,* and so on.

It should be realized that as the movements of the lips are quite independent of those of the tongue, *Rounding* may be combined with any *Position*, or *Height*, or *Condition* of the tongue.

The student should therefore practise combining *Rounding* with every possible tongue position, and also, starting with familiar *Round* vowels, he should learn to unround these, without altering the tongue position.

§ 49. Degrees of Rounding: Different Kinds of Rounding.

Some vowels have more *Rounding* than others. Normally, this depends upon the *Height* of the tongue; the higher the tongue, the greater the degree of *Rounding*. Some languages have abnormally *rounded* vowels, that is, vowels with greater or less rounding than normally belongs to that degree of *height* with which they are uttered. Vowels which have more than normal *rounding* are known as *over-rounded*, those which have less, as *under-rounded. Over-rounding* occurs in the German *ü* in *Bühne*, where a *mid-front-tense* has the degree of *rounding* which belongs to a *high* vowel, so that the *ü* here is really [ʚ] with increased *rounding*. Again, the Swedish *god* 'good' is a *mid-back-tense* with *over-rounding*.

The effect upon the ear of an *over-rounded* vowel is that of the next higher round vowel, so that the vowel in *Bühne* suggests [ȳ] and that in Sw. *god* [ū].

In *Back-round vowels* the shape of the lip-opening is roughly ○, in *Front-round vowels*, roughly 0.

§ 50. Table of Vowel Sounds.

Unrounded Vowels.

	Front.		Back.		Flat.	
	Tense.	*Slack.*	*Tense.*	*Slack.*	*Tense.*	*Slack.*
High	i *he, Sie*	*i Fisch*			ï Russ. сыръ	*i* bit (Engl.)
Mid	e *dé, sehr*	ɛ *bell,* Germ. Bett	a *but* (Engl.)	*a* father, *Mann*	ë *gute*	ə father, a
Low		æ *hat* (Engl.)		âpre	ʌ *bird*	

Rounded Vowels.

	Front.		Back.		Flat.	
	Tense.	*Slack.*	*Tense.*	*Slack.*	*Tense.*	*Slack.*
High	y lune	*tyttö* (Finn.)	u *who, shoot; ruh*	*u put,* Kuss	ü Swed. *fru*	
Mid	ø *le,* Goethe		o beau	*o* Germ. Gott		*bonne*
Low		ö *beurre,* Götter	ɔ *hall*	ɔ hot (Engl.)		

§ 51. Pitch of Vowels.

Every vowel sound has an inherent musical *pitch*, or note, which depends upon the shape of the mouth passage, the condition of the tongue, and the position of the lips. This inherent pitch is drowned in ordinary speech by the powerful vibration of the vocal chords, and is best heard by *Whispering* the vowel.

By *Whisper* phoneticians mean a definite contraction of the Glottis, which causes a slight friction of the air-stream against the walls of this organ.

The factors which determine pitch have been briefly mentioned, but it may make it clearer if it be said that *front* vowels are *higher* in pitch than *back* vowels; *high* are vowels higher in pitch than *mid*, *mid* higher in pitch than *low*; *tense* vowels have a higher pitch than *slack*; *unrounded* vowels are higher than *rounded* vowels.

§ 52. Quantity or Vowel Length.

The length or duration of a vowel sound is relative to other vowels in the language. In English our so-called short

vowels are often of considerable length, as long as, or even longer, than what are considered long in other languages.

Although there is no necessary connexion between *Length* and *Tenseness*, many languages tend to make most of their *long* vowels *tense* and their *short* ones *slack*. In English and German *long* [i] and [u] are always *tense*, the same sounds when *short* always *slack*. This same is not true of French, however, where [i] and [u] are always *tense*, and generally short, except before *r*.

§ 53. Nasal Vowels.

All vowel sounds may be pronounced with the nose passage open, and vowels so uttered are called *nasal* or *nasalized* vowels. Such vowels, though frequent in French and in Polish, are unknown in Standard English and in German. They certainly existed, however, in prehistoric O.E., as well as in West Germanic and Primitive Germanic. We express them by placing [˜] over the ordinary vowel symbol, thus [bɔ̃] = French *bon*.

§ 54. Intermediate Degrees of Height.

Although we only distinguish three characteristic degrees of *Height*, intermediate degrees occur in many languages and dialects. Thus in many forms of Provincial English a pure *mid-front-slack* is unknown, the sound being replaced by a *mid* vowel so much lowered in the direction of the *low-front* [æ] that to unaccustomed ears it is barely distinguishable from that sound. In Modern Dutch the *high-front-slack* seems to be lowered to the *mid-front*, while in words where this must once have existed the sound is lowered to the *low-front*. Thus *pit* 'lamp-wick' sounds like [pɛt], and *veldt* like [vælt].

In Danish [e] is raised almost to [i]. These facts are instructive in tracing the history of pronunciation in a language. For instance, when we find that in English an earlier [hēd] 'heed' has become [hīd], there can be little doubt that we have here the result of a process of gradual raising, and that at one time our ancestors must have pronounced a raised form of [e], not yet [i] but gradually tending towards it.

§ 55. Diphthongs.

A *diphthong* is a combination of two distinct vowel sounds, one of which only is *stressed* or accentuated. Only the stressed element in a true diphthong is syllabic, the other element being too much lacking in sonority, compared with the strong element, to function as a separate syllable.

§ 56. The Syllable.

The simplest account of what constitutes a syllable is to say that anything which maintains a unity of utterance produces the impression of a single syllable; anything which tends to break up or destroy that unity produces the impression of more than one syllable.

The syllable is the unit of utterance, and may consist of a single vowel [*a*, *ā*]; of a single consonant [l, v, b, p], etc.; of a vowel + consonant [*at*, *al*]; of two vowels dominated by one stress [*ái*, *iá*], etc.; of a group of consonants uttered with a single impulse of stress [pst].

The factors which break up the unity of an utterance are differences of Stress and differences of Sonority.

§ 57. Stress.

If [*ā*] be uttered with gradually diminishing Stress or Loudness, the sense of unity remains, and the same is true of a long vowel uttered with equal loudness throughout its whole duration.

If, on the other hand, a long vowel be uttered with strong or loud beginning, then sudden diminution of stress, then sudden increase, and again a diminution, the result is not one long, but a series of short syllables [*áaáaáa*]. This series would consist of six syllables, three strong and three weak.

§ 58. Sonority.

Such combinations as [*al*, *ad*, *aþ*, *ai*] consist of a sonorous element followed by one less sonorous. The reduction in sonority is gradual, and does not break the sense of unity. On the other hand, if the sonority be reduced and then increased again, the effect is at once that of two syllables. Thus [*ala*, *aþa*, *aia*] cannot be other than two syllables. Here the sonority is reduced by [l, þ, *i*] respectively. [*a*] being a vowel is more sonorous than [l, þ]; much more so than the latter, which is not only a consonant, but voiceless. [*a*] is more sonorous than [*i*] because, although the latter is a vowel, it is a high-vowel, and therefore has a narrower air-passage than the former, which is a mid-vowel.

Sonority then may be reduced in various ways: (1) by a pause, as in [*a*]/[*a*]; (2) by a Stop placed between vowels, which interrupts the sound altogether for a moment, if voiceless, and almost so, if voiced—[*aba*, *apa*]; (3) by an open consonant, which requires a narrower air-passage, and is therefore less sonorous than the highest vowel uttered with equal force [*afa*, *aþa*, *asa*, *aza*], etc.; (4) by a less sonorous

(higher) vowel, between two more sonorous (lower) vowels [*aua, aia*].

In combinations such as [æpl] we have the requisite conditions for the existence of two syllables—Sonorous sound + complete momentary cessation of sound in [p], followed by great increase of sonority in [l]. The last sound here becomes syllabic by contrast with the un-sonorous [p]. In [pl̩it] there is only one syllable, because there is a gradual increase of sonority from the beginning of the word until the first element of the diphthong, and then a gradual reduction. [l] here is not syllabic because its sonority is drowned by the greater sonority of the vowel which follows.

§ 59. Limits of the Syllable.

The question, at what point one syllable ends and the next begins, is largely one of the incidence of fresh stress or impulse of breath.

The point of lowest stress constitutes the close of the syllable, and the next begins at the moment at which the new impulse is given. In *anigh* [ə/nai], the nasal consonant begins with the breath impulse, and it therefore belongs to the second syllable. In *an eye*, in careful speech [ən *ai*] the reduction goes on until the end of [n], and the new impulse begins with [*ai*]; in this case, therefore, [n] belongs to the first syllable.

In rapid, unstudied speech, the syllable-division in *an eye* tends to be precisely the same as in *anigh*, namely [ə/nai].

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE HISTORY OF LANGUAGE

§ 60. It has already been pointed out, in the Introductory Chapter, that the drama of the development of Language takes place, so to speak, upon the lips and in the minds of living human beings, and not in books or written documents. In other words, language changes by being spoken.

We are therefore concerned to understand, so far as may be, how the activities of the speakers are related to the changes which these make in their language.

We must consider that if a nation gradually alters its language it is the individual speakers who are each and all responsible for what is happening. What is true of the individuals will be true also for the community as a whole, for this consists of a number of individuals.

§ 61. We can, then, begin by considering the behaviour of the individual as a speaker, that is, as a channel and transmitter of language. Why should he change his speech? Having learnt to speak, as his fathers have taught him, why should he not preserve his language unaltered and hand it on in his turn, unaltered, to the younger generations?

§ 62. The answer to this may be briefly summarized by saying that language is the expression of the thoughts and emotions of the human mind, by means of sounds, produced by certain movements of human bodily organs—the organs of speech.

This being so, there is a prima facie probability that language will not remain unchanged as it passes from generation to generation, for it is clear that the thoughts and feelings of humanity, even of such a portion of it as we call a single race, tribe, nation, are not at all times the same, but are capable of enrichment, expansion, and modification in a hundred ways, with the advance of civilization or the fortunes of its history. More than this, what can be more subject to alteration than

the way in which a series of bodily movements are performed by human beings? If we remember that a slight change in the way of moving the organs of speech may cause a very considerable alteration in the sound which results, it does not surprise us that pronunciation should change.

§ 63. Now the individual, having acquired the sounds of his mother tongue, having, that is to say, mastered the various series of movements of the vocal organs necessary to the production of the different sounds, does not carry out these movements always in precisely the same way. He varies slightly, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another. According to his personal habits he will tend to vary more commonly in one particular way, and thus he forms a new habit. From this new habit of using his organs of speech, the individual necessarily produces a slightly different sound from that with which he started. It must be noted that both the new way of using the speech organs, and the sound which results from this, deviate so slightly from the old that the speaker is quite unaware of the fact that anything is being changed. If he were by chance to diverge to an appreciable and recognizable extent from the pictures of sound and movement which exist in his mind he would at once feel that he had made a 'slip of the tongue', for his muscular sensations and his ear would tell him that he was 'wrong', and he would 'correct' himself. Thus no new habit could be started by a sudden, considerable, and appreciable divergence from the sound at which the speaker is unconsciously aiming. New departures in pronunciation, therefore, are necessarily unconscious, and *sound change is gradual.*

The tendency to variation is continuous, so that when the individual has formed a new habit he does not stick to it, but proceeds to diverge again from this fresh starting-point.

§ 64. But what is true of a single speaker is true also of all his companion speakers, of all the members of the community. They all tend to change their pronunciation, and they agree, on the whole, in the particular direction in which their tendency runs. This agreement in the direction of change is brought about by social intercourse, whereby speakers tend to assimilate their speech to that of the other persons among whom they live and with whom they consort most frequently and intimately. The closer the bond of union between the members of a group of speakers, the more closely the speech of all will agree. But no two individuals, however much they may resemble each other, are precisely alike in all respects.

It is therefore inconceivable that all the members of a large community should agree exactly in their tendencies. We have to distinguish (*a*) tendencies which are shared by the whole community, and (*b*) tendencies which are not common to the whole but belong only to a comparatively few individuals. The groups of tendencies which come under (*b*) are got rid of, and eliminated by the wear and tear of social intercourse, while the groups (*a*) pervade the whole community and become the universal tendency of the community. Thus it is possible to state as a general principle, that at a given time, in a particular community, a given sound will tend to be pronounced in the same way, and also, what is pretty much the same thing, will tend to change in the same direction. This remains true of all the words in which the sound occurs *under the same conditions.*

§ **65.** The last expression needs some explanation. We distinguish two kinds of sound change, *Isolative* and *Combinative.* By Isolative sound change is meant change which occurs in a sound without any influence being exerted upon it by other sounds in the word or sentence. By Combinative sound change is meant a change in pronunciation brought about by the influence of other sounds in the same word or sentence. Thus the change of Primitive O.E. *ǣ* to *ē* in the Anglian and Kentish Dialects is an Isolative change. Whenever this sound *ǣ* occurs it is raised to *ē*: *wǣron* becomes *wēron*, *rǣd* becomes *rēd*, *sċǣp* becomes *sċēp*, and so on. On the other hand, the change of original *c* [k] to *ċ* [t] in O.E. is purely a Combinative change, since it only occurs before Primitive O.E. front vowels, or, when final, *after* front vowels: *ċēās* 'chose', earlier **kæus*, *ċin* 'chin', earlier **kin*, *ċetel* 'kettle', earlier **kætil*, and so on.

Thus we must qualify the statement that the same sound always changes in the same way, by the addition of the words —*under the same conditions.* It sometimes happens that it takes a long time to discover the precise conditions which determine a sound change. Thus it took forty years after Grimm had formulated his Law of the changes of Indo-Germanic *p, t, k* in Germanic, before the conditions were discovered which determined the changes, apparently exceptional, of these sounds which appeared in certain words. Then, in 1877, Verner was able to supplement the original statement by supplying the conditions under which, instead of appearing in the Germanic Languages as the corresponding *Voiceless Open* consonants, the above sounds were voiced.

This time it turned out that the 'exceptional' voicing which had puzzled Grimm, his contemporaries, and immediate successors, was due to the place of the Accent. (See § 346.)

We proceed, then, with our investigations into the history of a language on the assumption of the principle that *Sound Laws admit of no exceptions*, subject to the limitations of time, dialect, and phonetic conditions just referred to.

If apparent exceptions appear, they may be capable of explanation: (*a*) by the discovery of the *Combinative Factors* at work; (*b*) by the 'exceptional' form being borrowed from another dialect where the sound changes followed different lines; (*c*) by the principle of *Analogy*, which will be discussed later on.

§ 66. The Rise of Dialects.

We have so far considered sound change only as occurring regularly and uniformly throughout a single speech community. Outside the narrow limits of our community the same original sound may be treated in very different ways. This brings us to the question of the rise of Dialects, or varieties of speech, from what was once a uniform, homogeneous language.

The very conception of a Family of Languages, with a common ancestor, from which all the related languages have sprung, implies this *Differentiation of Dialect*, as we call it.

The existence of differences in speech, whether in modern England or ancient Germany, means that we have not a single community but many, not one Dialect but many.

§ 67. If we define *Speech Community* as a group of human beings between whom social intercourse is so intimate that their speech is practically homogeneous, then whenever we find appreciable speech differences we must assume as many communities, and it will follow that there will be as many Dialects as communities. Thus, any factors that split up one community into two or more are also factors of differentiation of dialect. The main factors which divide one group of human beings from another are: (1) *Geographical and Physical*—seas, rivers, mountain ranges, distance, any features of the country which actually separate communities by interposing barriers between them; (2) *Occupational*—differences of employment, which lead, in modern society, to distinctions of *Class*; (3) *Political*, or divisions which depend not on physical boundaries but on arbitrary lines of demarcation, drawn for purposes of government—e.g. county, or even parish boundaries, or frontiers between countries.

The ideal condition of a community with a ring-fence round it, shutting it off from all other communities and their influence, is only realizable in districts remote from large centres of population, and where high mountains, deep valleys, broad rivers, moors, or deserts form natural means of isolation. Similarly, a community in the ideal sense, one in which there are no factors that divide the people up into more or less distinct groups, so that every individual has free and frequent social intercourse with every other, is hardly a conceivable phenomenon except under the most primitive conditions and when the population is small.

§ 68. What result does the division of one community into several exert upon the language? Why should it give rise to dialectal variety? Because when one part of a community is isolated from the rest, the balance of tendencies and of checks is altered. Individual tendencies, which under the old conditions were shared only by a small minority and therefore eliminated, exist in a different proportion under the new conditions, and survive unchecked by social intercourse as it now exists. In a word, different tendencies to variation flourish in the various parts of what was originally a single, undivided community. The result is that the speech changes in different directions, and on different lines, in each of the newly-formed communities. Such is the beginning of Dialectal divergence, which if it continues for a long period of time produces differences of the kind and extent that we can witness in comparing the various Germanic languages with each other, and further, the far greater distinctions that are seen in comparing Germanic speech with Italic, or Celtic, and so on.

§ 69. The difference between a Dialect and a Language is one of degree and not of kind. If one form of speech is a mere variant of another, and shows but a slight divergence from it, one which only affects certain features, and these, perhaps, to a comparatively slight extent, so that the speakers of the two varieties are mutually intelligible, we should apply to such differences the term Dialect. When, however, the differences become so considerable, after a long independent development, that one set of speakers must acquire deliberately the mode of speech of the other before communication between them is possible, then we should say that here we have two separate languages. But even this terminology is rather popular than scientific, and philologists often employ the word *Dialect* where in popular phraseology *Language* would be used.

§ 70. Analogy.

By the side of sound change the other great factor in the development of language is *Analogy*. This principle has long been recognized among students of language, but a distinction was formerly made by Grammarians between 'true' and 'false' Analogy. The former was supposed to be a legitimate and natural process, the latter a corrupt and erroneous one. This distinction can no longer be maintained, and whatever the results may be, whether conservative and in accordance with past habits in the language, or whether, on the other hand, they lead to new departures, and, historically speaking, 'incorrect' forms, the process of Analogy is now recognized as being a perfectly natural one, of the same essential nature in all cases, and one which at every period of every language is necessarily in operation.

Briefly, analogy is the process whereby, in the first instance, words are associated in the mind in groups, whether it be according to *meaning*, *grammatical function*, *resemblance of sound*, to a combination of two of these, or even of all three. When once words have become associated together in the mind there is a tendency to connect them still more intimately and treat them as far as possible in the same way.

It is by virtue of the process of Analogy that we are able to conjugate the verbs, decline the nouns, form adverbs from adjectives, and so on, in any language which we know. As a rule, especially if the language be our native tongue, we arrive at the same results as the majority of speakers of our age and class. This means that, on the whole, our association-groups are the same as theirs. Thus we associate the Pl. of *cat* with thousands of other Pls. and unhesitatingly form [kæts] from the Sing. [kæt]; we do not find any difficulty in forming the adverb *cunningly*, etc., from *cunning*, etc., even if it should happen that we do not remember to have heard the particular adverb before. We have plenty of analogous forms to serve as a pattern. Similarly, we should not hesitate to form the Pret. *jeered* [džiəd] from the Vb. *jeer*, on the analogy of *cleared*, etc. All these happen to be in accordance with the habits of Standard English at the present time, and therefore the results are what the older school would call 'true' Analogy. But supposing that on the Analogy of *to clear*, *to fear*, *to jeer*, we formed the Pret. of *to hear* '*heared*' [hiəd]. This would be a perfectly natural process, and, indeed, identical with that whereby in the other cases we had arrived at 'correct' results, but the form in this case would not be in accordance with the habits of educated speech. It so happens

that in Standard English *hear*, as regards its Pret., is an isolated word which has to be learnt specially. If we have never noticed the form [hɑ̄d] and do not know it, we cannot invent it; the ordinary Analogies do not work here. The old school would call this 'false' Analogy. It is as if in German, on the Analogy of *tragen*, Pret. *trug* [trūχ], we made a Pret. *sug* [sūχ] for *sagen*. As a matter of fact, the Pret. *frug* instead of *fragte* from *fragen* is often used, and it is clearly due to 'false' Analogy. It would be perfectly natural to use *sug* if we use *frug*, especially as *sagen* and *fragen* are associated in meaning as well as by sound. That this kind of thing continually happens in the history of a language, no one who has studied the subject doubts, and such 'false' Analogies constantly become the received and 'correct' forms.

This simply means that from age to age the association-groups of a community change their content. As it is, we find at the present day different association-groups among persons of different education and social class. This is well illustrated if we compare the standard language with the various popular dialects.

It often happens that in the declension of a noun, or the conjugation of a verbal tense, two quite distinct types or forms of the base or root arise, and that in the course of time the differences between the two forms becomes extreme, so that it is difficult to associate them together as merely Sing. and Pl. of the same noun or whatever it may be. Thus the OE. Sing. type of *dæġ* 'day' in M.E. is *dei*, or *dai*, whereas the Pl., which in O.E. is *dagas*, *daga*, *dagum*, becomes in M.E. *dāwes*, &c. In Present-day English this difference would result in Sing. [dei], Pl. [dɔ̄z]. As a matter of fact, already in M.E. one or other type is usually eliminated in such a case as this, and the dialect settles down either upon the *day*-type or the *daw*-type, and uses this for both numbers. No doubt, had there been a fair number of common words, sufficient to form an association-group of *-ei* or *-ai* as a Sing. form, and *-aw* as a Pl. form, the distinction might have been preserved longer, but as it is there was nothing to support a vowel change of this nature, combined with the addition of the Pl. suffix, so the Pl. type of the root disappeared. Those words which we call mutation-plurals—*teeth*, *geese*, *men*, etc., had in O.E. the mutated vowel in the Dat. Sing. as well as in the Nom. and Acc. Pl., whereas the un-mutated vowel occurred also in the Gen. and Dat. Pl. What happened was that in those few words which preserved mutation, the whole Sing. was formed on the type of the Nom. and Acc. Sing.

without mutation, and the whole Pl. on the type of the Nom. and Acc. Pl. with mutation. The case-sense, as we may call it, did not survive long in M.E. and, apart from the Possessive or Gen. case, a word was felt merely to be in the Nom. or case of the Subject, or else in the Acc. or case of the Object—the Dat. case relation being no longer felt.

Enough has been said to enable the student to understand what is meant by Analogy, and to guard him against surprise when he finds the far-reaching effects of the process in making new departures from the historically 'correct' usage.

§ 71. Foreign Contact.

When two communities, speaking different languages, or even different forms or dialects of the same language, come into close social contact, it generally happens that the speech of each is influenced by the other.

If the members of the two communities become so intimately intermingled that they intermarry, and gradually fuse into a single community, there is generally a period of bilingualism, during which all members of the community speak both tongues.

Then one or other of the two languages gradually ceases to be spoken and the other survives as the sole language.

Such conditions as these inevitably result in modification of the pronunciation of one or both languages, and in mutual exchanges in vocabulary. This actual physical contact between two groups of speakers brings about what we call *Direct* influence of one language upon the other.

The result of this intimate association upon pronunciation is that one language is spoken with a 'foreign accent', so that many or all the characteristic sounds of a language are given up in favour of those in the other which most closely resemble them. In many districts of Wales, where English has been spoken for generations alongside of Welsh, the English pronunciation is as foreign as that of a German or a Frenchman, and although there is extraordinary fluency and volubility, and even considerable 'correctness' in Grammar and Syntax, the sentence stress, the intonation, and all the sounds are purely Welsh and un-English.

Some such fate as this probably overtook Norman French as spoken in this country, some time before it died out.

The effect of bilingualism upon vocabulary is that speakers to whom two languages are equally familiar frequently introduce words from one language into their discourse when they are speaking the other.

The first words thus introduced will naturally be such as denote objects or ideas which are new to the people into whose language they are introduced, for which therefore there are no corresponding terms. But the process is soon extended to words for which native terms do exist. Thus the familiar words *skin*, *sky*, *they*, *their* were introduced from Scandinavian into English, as it might be said, without any adequate reason. Again, if the two languages thus brought into contact are closely related to start with, many words, though differing slightly in form in each tongue, are perfectly intelligible to all, in either form. This was the case for Old English and Old Norse, and there is no doubt that English speakers often used the English and Norse forms indiscriminately. This fact probably accounts for our present forms *give* and *get*, to mention no more, which certainly cannot be derived from the original pure English forms.

When at last one language dies out, and the other becomes the only form of speech, the survivor will have acquired, in the way just described, a more or less considerable number of ***loan-words*** from the language which has perished, and many of these will remain as permanent elements, used, sometimes, instead of native words, which they have ousted, sometimes, by the side of these, to express an identical object or idea, or with a slight differentiation of meaning.

Words borrowed in this direct way usually have the nearest approximate pronunciation to the original which the borrowers can manage. The subsequent history of the pronunciation of these words is identical with that which the sounds which they contain undergo in native words in the language into which they have passed.

§ **72.** The chief foreign linguistic influences which have been exerted *directly* upon English are those of the language of the Scandinavian invaders and settlers of England, and of Norman French. We must, however, include the early Latin loan-words acquired in Britain from Celtic speakers of Latin, and a great deal of the Latin which came in through the influence of the early Church, for many Latin terms used in connexion with religion, and learnt directly from public services, became familiar household words.

§ **73.** By *Indirect* influence, we mean that exerted through literature. Words from ancient and modern languages are acquired by English writers from the authors they study, and are introduced by them into their own writings. Many of these remain purely literary words, or never gain currency at

all; others pass from literature into everyday speech. Modern scientific conceptions, new substances, and processes the result of scientific investigation, are commonly designated by Greek terms, often taken straight out of the dictionary.

The distinction between *popular* and *learned* words is an important one, though not always easy to draw. The character of a word from this point of view depends not upon its origin, but its usage. *Phonograph* is made up of two Greek words, and is therefore of learned origin, but with the spread of the machine among the people, the name has passed into popular usage. On the other hand, such words as *eftsoons*, *welkin*, *whilom*, and many more of the same kind, are pure English in origin, yet are in no sense *popular*, but rather, so far as they can be said to exist at all, at the present day, belong exclusively to learned, or literary language.

§ **74.** We must not omit to mention the influence of one dialect, or variety, of the same language upon another. This has been of great importance in the history of English. The existence of various dialectal elements in Standard English has been determined by political, economic, and social causes. These may take the shape of spreading a particular sound change far beyond its original regional limits, or they may produce the wholesale importation of a particular dialectal type of certain words into a *Regional*, or *Class Dialect* to which this was formerly quite alien.

The most typical features of dialect, it should be remembered, are pronunciation, and grammatical forms. It is a far more difficult thing to localize vocabulary, and track it down to its original source. Most Standard English speakers use a certain number of 'Dialect' words, sometimes deliberately, knowing them to be such, sometimes without realizing the fact. This is particularly the case with terms relating to agriculture and sport. No Standard English speaker, except as a joke, would say, '*us kep on tellin' he not to hurt un*' [as kɛp on tɛlin ī not tu ā't ən], or talk about [rən, bəil, baʃ, ūk, kum, ī] for [rein, boil, buʃ, huk, kam, hī] *rain*, *boil*, *bush*, *hook*, *come*, *he*. On the other hand, any one who turns over the pages of a Dialect Dictionary cannot fail to come across dozens of words with which he has been familiar all his life. This means, either that the reader is a 'Dialect speaker' without knowing it, or that the dictionary-maker has been unable to distinguish between 'Dialect' and Standard English.

CHAPTER V

HISTORY OF ENGLISH SOUNDS

I. The Old English Period

§ 75. Sources of our Knowledge of O.E.

From the point of view of the student of English Literature or Culture, everything which survives in the documents of the O.E. period is of more or less interest. In particular, the more imaginative poetical literature would claim our attention from these points of view; the philosophical and religious treatises which exist in the form of Homilies; the Laws, and the books on Medicine and the use of herbs, and charms,—all have their claims on our consideration for various reasons. Again, the Lexicographer, and the student of O.E. as a mode of expression, would cast their net as widely as possible, and, to them, the precise dialect in which the literature was written would not be of prime concern.

In the present instance, however, our aim is to get a clear idea of the phonological peculiarities of each of the O.E. dialects, and for this purpose, we must base our investigation upon those texts whose place, or area of origin is pretty definitely known. Our list of sources, then, is a comparatively narrow one, and we are guided in our selection of the texts, not by their literary merits, but simply by their fitness to illustrate, in a reliable manner, particular dialects at a particular time. Apart from the texts mentioned below as definitely belonging to other dialects, most of the important O.E. documents which survive are written in a form in which the W.S. elements greatly predominate, but they often show a mixture of dialectal elements from other sources. This, as in the case of the poetry, is generally the result of the texts having been done into W. Saxon, from another dialect, in which process some of the original features have been allowed to remain unaltered. Poetical texts not infrequently bear traces of having passed through several dialects, all of which have left their mark, as in Beowulf, in the form we possess.

Pure examples of the various dialectal types are found in the following works:

§ 76. A. Northumbrian.

1. **Earliest Texts.**

Fragments (poetical) in Sweet's Oldest English Texts (O.E.T.), pp. 149, etc. circa 737.
Liber Vitæ (Personal Names), O.E.T., pp. 153, etc.

Northern Area.

Genealogies. O.E.T., p. 167, etc.
Place and Personal Names in Moore MS. of Bede's Eccl. Hist., O.E.T., p. 131, etc. circa 737.
Ruthwell Cross Inscription, O.E.T., pp. 125, 126.
[There are no ninth-century Northumbrian Texts.]

2. **Late Texts.**

Northern Area.

Durham Ritual: Surtees Soc., vol. iv, 1849 (collated by Skeat, Trans. Phil. Soc., 1879).
Durham Book, also called *Lindisfarne Gospels.* Ed. Skeat, Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, 1871–1887.

Southern Area.

Interlinear version of the *Gospels of SS. Mark, Luke, John*, in Rushworth MS., known as *Rushworth*[2]. Ed. Skeat in Gospels cited above.

§ 77. B. Mercian.

1. **Earliest Texts.**

Epinal Glossary (circa 700)
Corpus Glossary (circa 750)
} Both in O.E.T., pp. 36–107.
Eighth-Century Charters [in Latin; containing O.E. words and names], O.E.T., pp. 429, etc.

2. **Ninth-Century Texts.**

Vespasian Psalter and Hymns, O.E.T., pp. 183, etc.

3. **Late Texts.**

Interlinear Gloss to St. Matthew (Rushworth[1], second half of tenth century), Skeat's Gospels in Anglo-Saxon.
Royal Glosses (fr. MS. Royal 2 A. 20). Ed. Zupitza, in Zeitschr. f. d. A., Bd. xxxiii, pp. 47, etc. circa 1000.

§ 78. **C. West Saxon.**

Earliest Texts.

Charters: 1. (692 or 693); 2. (693–731); 3. (778). O.E.T., pp. 426–427.

Ninth-Century Texts.

Works of King Alfred: { *Cura Pastoralis*, Sweet, E.E.T.S., 1871. / *Orosius*, Sweet, E.E.T.S., 1880.

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Parker MS. to 891, Plummer, Oxford. 2 vols. 1892–1900.

Late Texts.

Ælfric's Grammar and Glossary (circa 1000). Ed. Zupitza, 1880.

Ælfric's Homilies. Editions by Thorpe, and Skeat.

West Saxon Gospels (in C.C.C.C. MS.). Ed. Skeat, Gospels in Anglo-Saxon.

D. Saxon Patois.

Late O.E.

Blickling Homilies (dated 979). Ed. Morris, E.E.T.S., 1880.

Harleian Gloss (MS. Harl. 3376), printed in Wright-Wülker's Glossaries, vol. i. 192, etc.

§ 79. **E. Kentish Texts.**

Earliest Texts.

Charters (seventh and eighth centuries), O.E.T., pp. 427, etc.

Ninth Century.

Charters, in O.E.T., pp. 441, etc.; three of these also in Sweet's *A.-S. Reader*, pp. 189, etc.

Bede Glosses (MS. Cotton C. II, circa 900), O.E.T., pp. 179, etc.

Late Texts.

Kentish Glosses, Zupitza, in Zeitschr. f. d. A., xxi, pp. 1, etc., and xxii, pp. 223, etc.; also in Wright-Wülker's *Vocabularies*, 55, etc.

Kentish Hymn, in Kluge's *Ags. Lesebuch*, and Sweet's *A.-S. Reader*.

Kentish Psalm (Ps. l.), in Kluge's *Lesebuch*.

§ 80. Mode of Writing Old English.

The English, like all the Germanic tribes of Germany and Scandinavia, used at a very early period certain angular letters, which they graved upon horn, stone, wood, or metal. These letters, known as *Runes*, were chiefly used in charms, and inscriptions commemorating the dead or the illustrious upon monuments. Some of these inscriptions still exist in England, and upon the Continent, but they are, for the most part, of no very great antiquity, not older indeed than the earliest manuscripts.

The ordinary mode of writing, which the English acquired after embracing Christianity, was a form of the Latin alphabet, which had come through an Irish source. Modern Irish is still written and printed in characters which closely resemble those of the O.E. MSS.

In writing and printing O.E. at the present day we use the ordinary alphabet; except that we borrow the signs *æ*, *þ*, and *ð*. The first had the value of the *low-front-slack* vowel, which we also denote in this way in phonetic transcription; the two others appear to have been used indifferently for the *point-teeth-open*, whether *Voiced*, or *Unvoiced*. Some editors also print ƿ for *w*, and ȝ or ʒ for *g*, but this habit is very largely discarded now. ƿ and þ were taken over from the Runic alphabet.

NOTE. The names and forms of the various O.E. Runes are recorded in the *Runic Poem*, the text of which is given in *Bibl. d. ags. Poesie* (vol. containing Beowulf, etc.), 1883, p. 331, the text also by Bodkine, with a French translation, *La Chanson des Runes*, Havre, 1879. B. does not give the runes themselves. A table of all the known Germanic Runes, and an account of these, is given by Sievers in the section Schriftkunde in Paul's *Grundriss*. See also Bibliography above, B. vi.

§ 81. Pronunciation of O.E.

So far as we can discover, the following were the O.E. sounds:

SIMPLE VOWELS.

	Un-Rounded.		*Rounded.*	
	Front.	Back.	Front.	Back.
High	i, ī		H. y, ȳ	u, ū
Mid	e, ē	a, ā	M. œ, œ̄	o, ō
Low	æ, ǣ		L.	

§ 82.

DIPHTHONGS.

eo, ēo io, īo	ea, ēa	ie, īe

The diphthongs were pronounced pretty much as written; it should be noted, however, that whereas in *ĕ̄ŏ*, *ĭ̄ŏ*, the first element was probably *tense*, and definitely *mid*, and *high* respectively, in *ĕ̄ă* the first element was probably *slack*, and *low*. *ĭ̄ĕ* occurs only in W. Saxon, and at an early period was apparently levelled under *ĭ̄* in pronunciation, in part of the Saxon area. Elsewhere, in Late W.S. *ĭ̄ĕ* was monophthongized and rounded to [y̆].

There were, in O.E., probably, both varieties of diphthongs —*falling*, and *rising* diphthongs, e.g. *éo*, *eó*, etc.

In the latter, the first element was, originally, merely a glide-sound. This class of diphthongs are of later development than the other diphthongs which were developed in O.E. itself.

§ 83. Examples of the occurrence of O.E. Vowels.

O.E. Symbol.	*Analysis of Sound.*	*O.E. Words.*
a	mid-back, as in Germ. *Mann.*	*assa* 'ass', *dagas* 'days', *faran* 'to go'.
ā	mid-back long, as in Germ. *Wahn.*	*hām* 'home', *stān* 'stone', *hlāf* 'loaf'.
e	mid-front, as in Fr. *été.*	*beran* 'to bear', (*ġe*)*seten* 'set' (p.p.), *helan* 'hide'.
e	mid-front, as in Engl. *hen.*	*menn* 'men', *seċġan* 'to say', *sendan* 'send'.
ē	mid-front long, as Germ. *lehnen.*	*fēdan* 'to feed', *gēs* 'geese', *mētan* 'to meet', *hēr* 'here', *wē* 'we'.
i	high-front, as in Germ. *Biss.*	*sittan* 'to sit', *sċip* 'ship'.
ī	ibid. long, as in Germ. *Biene.*	*sīþ* 'journey, time', *wrītan* 'to write'.
æ	low-front, as in Engl. *hat*, etc.	*sæd* 'sated, weary', *cræft* 'skill, trade'.
ǣ	ibid. long.	*sǣd* 'seed', *grǣdig* 'greedy'.
o	mid-back round, as in Germ. *Stock.*	*hopu* 'hope', *horn* 'horn', *brocen* 'broken'.
ō	mid-back-tense-round, as in Germ. *Hohn.*	*bōt* 'help, remedy', *bōc* 'book, charter', *blōd* 'blood'.
u	high-back-round, as in Engl. *put.*	*sunu* 'son', *full* 'full'.
ū	high-back-tense-round, Germ. *Stube.*	*hūs* 'house', *rūn* 'whisper, mystery'.
y	high-front-round, Germ. *küssen.*	*cynn* 'race', *bycġan* 'to buy', *wyrm* 'worm'.
ȳ	ibid. long, French *pure.*	*fȳlan* 'defile', *brȳd* 'bride', *hȳþ* 'landing-place, harbour' (*hithe*).

§ 84. Diphthongs.

O.E. Symbol.	*O.E. Words.*
ea	*ċeaf* 'chaff', *hleahtor* 'laughter'.
ēa	*ċēas* 'chose', *rēad* 'red', *lēas* 'false'.
eo	*eorþe* 'earth', *heofon* 'heaven', *feohtan* 'to fight'.
ēo	*ċēosan* 'to choose', *hlēoþor* 'sound, melody'.
ie	*hierde* 'shepherd', *Sċieppend* 'Creator'.
īē	*hīēran* 'to hear', *ċīēsþ* 'he chooses'.

§ 85. The O.E. Consonants.

	Back.		Front.		Blade.		Blde.-Pnt.		Point.		Lip.	
	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.	V.	B.
Open	g	h	ġ	ħ	s	s		sċ	ȝ, þ	ȝ, þ	ƀ	
Stop	g	c	ċġ	ċ					d	t	b	p
Nasal	ng								n	hn	m	
Divided									l	hl		
Trill									r	hr		

	Lip-Back.		Lip-Teeth.	
	V.	B.	V.	B.
Open.	w	hw	f	f

NOTE. The symbols used in this table are not 'phonetic symbols' in the strict sense, but are those usually employed in writing and printing O.E. As they are fairly consistently employed to express the same sounds, they are, in a sense, 'phonetic'. The exceptions will be discussed directly.

§ 86. The chief inconsistencies in the use of O.E. graphic symbols are found in that of *g* and *c*. The former is used to express both a *Front*, and a *Back Open* consonant, and, probably by the tenth century, also a *Back Stop*. The combination *ċġ* nearly always expresses a *Front Stop*. *g*, and *ċġ* nearly always express *Voiced* sounds.

g, no matter what its origin, when it occurs *initially*, in a word, or syllable, before front vowels was the symbol of a *front-open-voiced* consonant [j]—*ġēar*, *ġiefan*, *heriġes*, etc. In grammatical works it is usually printed *ġ*, to distinguish it from the *back* consonant. Initially, before back vowels, and medially, in the same circumstances, it was in the earliest O.E., unquestionably, a *back-open-voiced* consonant (ȝ).

In this position, however, it probably became the present *stop* sound, during the O.E. period, though it is impossible to say precisely when. Most authorities agree that, at any rate by the year 1000, *gōd* 'good', *gān* 'to go', etc., were pronounced with a *back stop*. In the middle of words, between original back vowels, the sound certainly remained an *open consonant* during the whole O.E. period. Thus *āgan* 'own', *folgian* (from **fulgōjan*) 'follow', *sagu* 'saw, saying', etc., must always be pronounced with a *back-open-voiced* consonant. Any other pronunciation is ridiculous in the light of the subsequent history of the sound in words. A *back-stop-voiced* was a very rare, and probably a late development, medially, in O.E. as it certainly was initially. The medial consonant in *frocga* 'frog' is probably an example of this sound.

§ **87.** There is the same ambiguity in the use of the symbol *c* in O.E. It expresses, always indeed, a *voiceless stop* sound, but sometimes a *back*, and sometimes a *front voiceless stop*. Before original *back* vowels *c* stands for [k], as in *cot* 'dwelling', *catt* 'cat', *cōl* 'cool', etc. In the later MSS. *k* is sometimes written for this sound, but it is never consistently used, and *c* is by far the most usual symbol.

Before original O.E. front vowels, *c*, written *ċ* and *č* in grammatical works, is to be pronounced as a *front stop*—*ċiele* 'chill', *čīld*, 'child', *ċeaf* 'chaff'. The same rule applies when *c* occurs medially before *-i—rīċe* 'kingdom', from **rīki*. Finally, after *front* vowels *c* was also a *front* consonant—*līč* 'form, body', *þæċ* 'roof'. The reason for the fronted *ċ* in *sēċan, þenċan* will appear in the discussion of the principal O.E. sound changes (§ 104).

O.E. *sċ* was probably [s·t], that is, *s* followed by a voiceless front stop. It may have become [ʃ] before the end of the O.E. period.

§ **88.** *s* and *f* were pronounced as voiceless consonants [s, f] when final: *wæs* 'was', *æs* 'food, meat', *hlāf* 'loaf', etc.; initially, in the W. Saxon dialect, they were apparently voiced before vowels, as in Somersetshire and the South-West dialects at the present day (*s* was perhaps voiced initially in Kentish also): *singan*, 'sing', *fæt* 'vessel, vat', etc.; medially, between vowels they were always voiced: *lufu*, 'love', *rīsan* 'rise', etc., except when *s* was doubled as in *cyssan* 'kiss', etc.

§ **89.** *b* was originally a pure *lip-open-voiced* consonant [ƀ]. In early MSS. it is often written instead of the later *f*, between vowels—*hebuc* later *hafoc*, *heafoc* 'hawk'. Initially, it was

probably pronounced as a *stop* in the historical period. The *lip-stop-voice* does not occur medially in O.E. except when doubled—*hebban* 'lift up', etc. [For the origin of this doubling cf. § 93.]

§ 90. *h*, originally a *back-open-voiceless* consonant [χ], was fronted later before and after front vowels, *ġesi̇ht* 'sight', etc. Initially before vowels *h* was apparently a mere aspirate as at the present day, in the historical period. Medially, and finally before and after *back* vowels, *h* retained the pronunciation [χ].

§ 91. The combinations, *hl*, *hn*, *hr*, *hw*, are to be pronounced probably with voiceless *l*, *n*, and *r* respectively: *hleahtor* 'laughter'; *hnǣgan* 'neigh'; *hring* 'ring'; *hwæt* 'what', etc.

§ 92. *ð* and *þ* are used for the *point-teeth-open*, both *voice* and *breath*, indiscriminately. Initially and finally the sound was probably voiceless everywhere at first; medially between vowels *þ* and *ð* were voiced, and should be so pronounced.

§ 93. Doubled consonants should be pronounced long, with a fresh impulse in the middle of the sound. The chief sources of double consonants in O.E. are: (*a*) lengthening before *-j-*, e.g. *sittan*, earlier **sittjan*, from **setjan*; *sibb* 'relationship' from **sibjō*; *reċċan* from **rakjan* 'narrate', etc., etc. After a long vowel or a diphthong the double consonant is simplified, e.g. *tǣċan* 'teach' from **tākjan*, W. Gmc. **taikjan*, earlier **taikkjan*. (*b*) The combination *-ln-* becomes *-ll-* in Gmc., e.g. Idg. **pl̥no-*, Gmc. *full-*, O.E. *full*; O.E. *wulle* 'wool', earlier **wulnā*; cp. Lat. *lāna* from **wlana*.

NOTE. As we always mark the vowel quantities, and indicate whether *c* and *g* are fronted or not, the spelling of O.E. as it occurs in books for students, is practically a phonetic transcription, apart from the slight inconsistencies just noted. It is not usually necessary to mark the fronted form of *h*, *·h* = [j̊].

§ 94. Accentuation or Stress.

In O.E. as in other Germanic languages, the principal stress fell on the first, or 'root'-syllable of the word—*gōda* 'good', *hēofon* 'heaven', *ġeornende* 'running'.

Prefixes, such as *bi-*, *on-*, *ġe-*, are always unstressed.

§ 95. Plan of Treatment.

It may make the following account of the history of the O.E. vowels clearer, if we give at once some hint of the plan and arrangement of the subject which is here attempted.

It may be well to point out that in tracing the development of the W. Gmc. vowels in O.E. we are dealing with changes which for the most part took place in this country, and therefore, although many of them occurred in the period before written documents, they are, in fact, a part of the 'History of English'. Some knowledge of the origin of the O.E. sounds is necessary to the proper understanding of their subsequent development. The subject is divided as follows:

(1) We first give an account of the principal sound changes, both *Isolative* and *Combinative,* which affected *all* the O.E. dialects.

(2) We then pass to changes which are specifically W. Saxon to the exclusion of other dialects.

(3) Peculiarities common to all dialects except W. Saxon.

(4) Features shared by the Anglian Dialects, but not by W. Saxon or Kentish.

(5) Features peculiar (*a*) to Mercian, (*b*) to Northumbrian.

(6) Kentish characteristics.

(7) Summary of points of agreement and disagreement between the various dialects.

§ 96. The O.E. Vowel Sounds compared with those of West Germanic.

By comparing the forms of words in the other W. Gmc. languages, and in Gothic, we arrive at a view as to the original nature of Primitive O.E. sounds. The sounds, especially the vowels of the earliest historical period, are then seen to have undergone very considerable changes, both *Isolative* and *Combinative* (§ 65).

§ 97. Isolative Vowel Changes. Changes common to all Dialects of O.E.

(1) W. Gmc. *a* becomes O.E. *æ*: *dæġ* 'day', O.H.G. *tag*; *fæder* 'father', O.H.G. *fatar*, O. Sax. *fadar*; *wæġn* 'wagon', O.H.G. *wagan.*

NOTE 1. For subsequent treatment of *æ* in Kt. and Mercian see §§ 129, 137. In W.S. *æ* is written throughout the O.E. period, but the fact that the symbol *æ* is used very frequently in Ælfric to express the *ĕ*-sound rather points to the raising of *æ* to *ĕ* in L.W.S.

NOTE 2. For retention of W. Gmc. *a* in O.E. before a back vowel in following syllable, see § 107, Note.

(2) W. Gmc. *ā* becomes O.E. *ǣ*: *slǣpan*, 'sleep', O. Sax. *slāpan*, O.H.G. *slāfan*.

(3) W. Gmc. *au* becomes in O.E. **æu*, **æo*, **æa*, *ēā*: *ēāge* 'eye', O.H.G. *ouga*, Goth. *augō*; *ēāre* 'ear', Goth. *ausō*.

NOTE. This *ēā* was monophthongized to *ǣ* in late O.E. Cp. for instance the occasional spellings: *dǣð* 'death', *ġelǣfa* 'faith', *ǣdiga* 'blessed', for *dēāð*, *ġeleafa*, *ēādiġ*.

(4) W. Gmc. *ai* becomes O.E. *ā*: *hāl* 'whole' (adj.), Goth. *haīls*, O.H.G. *heil*; *āþ* 'oath', Goth. *aiþs*, O.H.G. *eid*.

(5) W. Gmc. *eu* becomes O.E. *ēo*: *þēod* 'nation, people', Goth. *þiuda*, O. Sax. *thioda*.

Combinative Vowel Changes common to all O.E. Dialects.

§ **98.** (1) W. Gmc. *ã* becomes O.E. *ō*. The nasalized *ã* of Gmc. and W. Gmc. undergoes first a process of rounding—to *õ*, and then a lengthened vowel is substituted for the short, nasalized vowel: *brōhte* 'brought' from **brayχta*, **brãχta*, **brõχta*; *fōn* 'take, seize' from **faŋχan*, **fãχan*, **fōhan*, etc.

§ **99.** (2) (*a*) W. Gmc. *ā*, which as stated in § 97 (2) is fronted to *ǣ* in Pr. O.E. by an isolative change, does not undergo this fronting if followed by *n* or *m*, but is rounded, and appears in the earliest historical period as *ō*:—*mōna* 'moon' from W. Gmc. **mānan-*, cp. O.H.G. *māno*, Goth. *mēna*; *nōmon* Pret. Pl. of *niman* 'to take' from **nāmum*, cp. O.H.G. *nāmum*, Goth. *nēmum*, etc. (*b*) W. Gmc. *ā* before *w*, or *g*, followed by a back vowel, remains in O.E.:—*sāwon*, *lāgon*, W. Gmc. **sāwum*, **lāgum*.

§ **100.** (3) **Pr. O.E. *ã* becomes *ō*.**

W. Gmc. *an-* (or *am-*), when it stood before the voiceless open consonants, *s*, *f*, *þ*, appears in the oldest English simply as *ō*. The *n* first nasalized *a* to *ã*, then this was rounded to *õ*, and as in the preceding case, nasalization was replaced by length, giving *ō*: O.E. *gōs* 'goose' from **gõs* from **gãs* from **gans*, cp. Germ. and Dutch *gans*; O.E. *tōþ* 'tooth' from original **tanþ*, cp. O.H.G. *zand*, O. Sax. *tand*; O.E. *sōfte* 'soft', O.H.G. *samfto*.

NOTE. This process, as regards the rounding, and substitution of length for nasalization, is identical with the preceding (§ 98 (1)), only whereas the nasal was lost before [*χ*], already in Pr. Gmc. and is thus absent in all Gmc. tongues, the loss of the consonant *n*, *m* before *s*, *f*, *þ*, is an O.E. process. It is impossible to say at what period the various languages lost the nasalization of *ã*.

It will be seen later that *n* was always lost in O.E. before *s*, *f*, *þ*, just as it is lost in Gmc. before *χ*. The other vowels are merely lengthened after losing their nasalization, but undergo no qualitative change comparable to that from *ã-* to *õ*, *ō* (§ 113).

§ 101. (4) Original an becomes on.

W. Gmc. *a* before nasal consonants which remain in O.E., is generally rounded to *o* in the period of Alfred: *lond*, *hond*, *monn* instead of earlier *land*, *hand*, *mann*. In later O.E. *land*, *hand*, etc., again predominate. In no period are either the *an* or *on* forms used with perfect consistency in any of the texts.

§ 102. (5) Fracture of Vowels before certain consonant combinations.

Fracture is the term applied to the diphthongization of front vowels before *rr*, and *r* + another consonant; *ll*, or *l* + another consonant; *h*, *hh*, or *h* + another consonant. Examples: **Fracture of e**: O.E. *steorra*, O.H.G. *sterro*; *eorþe* 'earth', O.H.G. *erda*; *seolh* 'seal', O.H.G. *selah* > **selh*; *feoh* 'money, property', O. Sax. *fehu*; *feohtan* 'to fight', O.H.G. *fehtan*. **Fracture of æ**: *earm* 'poor', O.H.G. *arm*; *eall* 'all', O.H.G. *all*; *eald* 'old', O.H.G. *alt*; *eahta* 'eight', O. Sax. O.H.G. *ahto*. **Fracture of Pr. O.E. ǣ**: *nēah* from **nǣh*, Goth. *nēh*.

Note 1. It is pretty certain that already in the late O.E. period, *ea* was monophthongized to *æ* and perhaps also raised to [ɛ]. Cp. § 97 Note, 120 Note. Such spellings as *swælt* for *swealt*, *swærtum* for *sweartum*, *andwærdum* for *andweardum*, *mærcode* for *mearcode*, all in Ælfric, taken in connexion with the M.E. development, seem to establish the monophthong in these cases.

Note 2. The process of '*Fracture*' consists in the development of a glide sound between the front vowel and the following *h*, *ll*, *rr*, *l*, *r*, or *h* + consonant. The cause of the development of this glide, which was originally of the nature of [w] or [u], lies in the nature of the following consonant. *h* was a back open consonant, a sound which easily tends to be lip-modified. *l* when doubled, or followed by another consonant, must have been pronounced with the fore part of the tongue hollowed. This gives a dull, 'guttural' effect to the sound, as is heard in many English and Scotch dialects at the present day. *r* when doubled, or followed by another consonant, was probably 'inverted', i. e. uttered with the point of the tongue turned upwards and backwards, without trilling. This sound is now pronounced in many Southern English dialects. Each of these articulations involves a considerable glide, after a front vowel. A very similar effect to *Fracture* is heard in such Cockney pronunciations as [*paiu*(l)], etc., for *pale*. Note that *e* undergoes no Fracture before the *l*-combinations, except *lh*, *lc*. The Fracture of *i* is indistinguishable from that of *e*, except in Northumbrian (§ 132).

§ 103. Mutation or 'Umlaut'.

There are two kinds of *Mutation* in O.E.: one, A. which affects *back* vowels, is caused by a following *i* or *j* and results in fronting of the vowel; the other, B. which affects *front* vowels, is

caused chiefly by *u*, or *o*, in some dialects also by *a*. The result of the latter process is to develop a vowel glide [*u*], which combines with the preceding front vowel to produce a diphthong. The former process is known as *i*- or *j*-mutation, the latter *u*-mutation, or *o/a*-mutation, according to the vowel which causes it.

i-mutation is by far the more universal of these two processes in O.E.; it affects all dialects, and is less liable than *u*-mutation to be upset by Analogy. *U*-mutation, or its result, on the other hand, is distributed, in different dialects, in varying degrees of frequency. W. Saxon, apart from certain conditions (see § 110), tends to eliminate the diphthongized forms due to *u*-mutation, in favour of those with simple vowels, which may occur in certain cases of nouns, or persons of verbs. Since *i*- or *j*-mutation is a *fronting* process, and *u*, *o/a* Mutation one which depends largely on the development of a *back* element after front vowels, we may call the former *Front-Mutation*, and the latter *Back-Mutation*.

§ 104. **A.** (6) **i- or j-Mutation in O.E.**

The law may be simply stated as follows: all original back vowels when followed in the next syllable of a word by *-i-* or *-j-*, are *fronted*, to the corresponding front vowels. Further O.E. *æ*, derived by isolative change from earlier *a* (§ 97 (1)) under the same conditions, is raised from a low, to the mid vowel *e*. The process of *i-*, *j*-mutation was fully completed before the period of the earliest O.E. documents, that is, before the end of the seventh century. It may therefore have begun a century earlier. It certainly was carried out in England, because it affects loan-words which the English only learnt after their invasion of these islands.

The process of fronting the vowel was due to the front-modification of the intervening consonant by the following *-i-* or *-j-*. This front-modified sound then influenced, and fronted the preceding vowel. When the consonant was back, *c*, or *g*, it became a pure front *ċ*, *ġ*, or, if *g* was followed by *j*, *ċġ*; thus **lægiþ* becomes in the first instance **læġiþ* 'lays'; **sōkja* 'I seek' becomes **sōċi*; **bruġgjō* 'bridge' becomes **bruċġ*, the phonetic values being [j, ˙t, ˙d].

§ 105. *i*- or *j*-mutation of *ō*. Primitive O.E. *ō*, no matter what its origin, becomes first [*ø*], written *oe*, which in all dialects except W. Sax. survives nearly to the end of the O.E. period. In W.S. *oe* (*mid-front-round*) is unrounded to *ē* before the period of King Alfred, in whose works there are however some slight traces of the spelling *oe*:

bēċ Dat. Sing. and Nom. and Acc. Pl. of *bōc* 'book', from **bōki-*; *sēċan* 'to seek', O. Sax. *sōkian*, Goth. *sōkjan*; cp. O.E. Pret. *sōhte* from **sōk-da*; *fēdan* 'to feed' from **fōd-jan*, cp. O.E. *fōda* 'food'; *cwēn* 'queen', Pr. O.E. **cwōni*, W. Gmc. **kwāni*, Gmc. **kwǣni* (cp. § 99).

§ **106.** Pr. O.E. *ā* (earlier *ai*) becomes *ǣ*:—*dǣlan* from **dāljan* 'divide', cp. O.E. un-mutated *dāl* 'portion', O.H.G. *teil*, Goth. *dails*. O.E. *dǣl* 'part' = **dāli* also exists, and is commoner than *dāl*. *tǣċan* 'teach' from **tākjan*, cp. Pret. *tāhte*.

lǣstan 'follow, carry out' from **lāstjan*, cp. O.H.G. *leistan*, O. Sax. *lēstian*, Goth. *laistjan*. O.E. has also the un-mutated noun *lāst* 'track', etc.

§ **107.** *i-*, *j*-Mutation of O.E. *a* and *æ*: Pr. O.E. *a* becomes *æ*: *hæbban* 'have' from **haƀjan*; *slæġen* 'slain' from **slagin*.

NOTE. W. Gmc. *a* normally becomes *æ* by an Isolative change in O.E. (§ 97 (1)), and on the Mutation of this see § 107 below; but *a* remains, or is restored, if a back vowel follows, hence *dagas* N. and A. Pl. of *dæġ*, *slagen*, one form of P.P. of *slēan* fr. **slaɣan*. It happens sometimes, though comparatively rarely, that an O.E. *a* which had originally a back vowel after it, is preserved as such till after the isolative tendency which changed Pr. *a* to *æ* has passed away. If syllables containing such *a* sounds receive a suffix with *i* or *j* later on, but before the period of *i-* or *-j*-Mutation, the *a* undergoes fronting to *æ*. This is the case with the forms *hæbban*, *slæġen*, above.

Pr. O.E. *æ* becomes *e* by *i-* or *j*-mutation: *settan* 'to place', from **sættjan*, cp. Goth. *satjan*; *mete* 'food', from **mæti*, cp. Goth. *mat-s*, O.H.G. *maz*, O. Sax. *meti* (with mutation); *here* 'army' from **hæri-*, O.H.G. *hari*, Goth. *harjis*; *sleġen*, P.P. of *slēan*, from **slæġin*.

§ **108.** Pr. O.E. *ū* becomes *ȳ*: *mȳs* Pl. of *mūs* 'mouse', from *mūsi*; *brȳd* 'bride', Goth. *brūþ-s*, stem **brūþi-*; *cȳþan* 'make known', Goth. *kunþjan*, Pr. O.E. **kūþjan*.

§ **109.** Pr. O.E. *ŭ* becomes *y̆*: *fyllan* 'to fill' fr. **fulljan*, cp. O.E. *full*, Goth. and O.H.G. *fulljan*; *pytt* 'pit, hole', O.H.G. *pfuzzi*, Early W. Gmc. loan-word from Latin *puteus*, W. Gmc. form **puttja*, Pr. O.E. **putti*.

NOTE. An original Gmc. *ŭ* became *o* in W. Gmc. if *ō*, *a*, or *ā* followed in the next syllable, but remained when followed by *-i-* or -j-. There are many 'roots' which occur both with *ō* or *a* suffixes, and also with suffixes containing *-i-* or *-j-*. In the former case we get *o* in the 'root' in O.E., in the latter *ŭ*. This *u*, later on, when the *i*-mutation period arrived, became *y̆*. Thus —*gold* 'gold' from **guldа-*, but *gylden* 'golden' from **guldin-*; *god* 'god' from **guđa-*, but *gyden* 'goddess' from **guđin-*; *fox* from **fuhsa*, but *fyxen* 'vixen' from **fuhsin-*. In these and similar cases, *y* is therefore the mutation of *ŭ* and not of *ŏ*.

Normally, *ŏ* cannot occur before *-i-* or *-j-*, (*a*) because *ŏ* in native words is not an original sound, but was developed in W. Gmc. out of *ŭ*, under the conditions just mentioned, and (*b*) because in those early loan-words where it occurred, it became *u* before *-i-* or *-j-*.

Thus if the sequence *ŏ* with *-i-* or *-j-* in the next syllable passed into W. Gmc. from Latin, as it sometimes did, it normally became *u*, and this naturally was mutated to *y̆* later on, e.g. Latin *monēta* became **monīt-*, whence **munit*, whence O.E. *mynet* 'coin'.

Therefore *ĕ* as the mutation of *ŏ* is very rare, and when it is found, needs special explanation. For instance, *oxa* 'ox' has a Pl. *œxen*, *exen* by the side of commoner *oxan*. Original **uhsa-* normally becomes *oxa* in O.E. If a form like **uhsin-* existed it would naturally become **yxen*, so that *exen* can only be explained by assuming that just before the period of mutation, but after the period at which *ŏ* followed by *-i-* became *ŭ*, a new formation **ŏhsin-* was made, on the analogy of **ohsa*; this new form **ohsin-* then became *œxen*, *exen* in the mutation period. A similar explanation must be sought for *ele* 'oil' from Latin *oleum*, W. Gmc. **olja*, **ulja*, and for the Dat. Sing. *dehter* of *dohter* 'daughter'.

NOTE. In *pencan*, *sendan*, *blendan* the *e* probably does represent the mutation of Pr. O.E. *o* from *a* before a nasal (§ 101)—**þankjan*<**þonkjan*, etc.

For the effects of *i*-mutation on the Pr. O.E. Diphthongs, see §§ 117, 118, 119, 124, 132, 139, which deal with the peculiar special developments of the various dialects.

§ 110. B. (7) Back-, or u-Mutation.

All the O.E. dialects are to some extent subject to this change, which consists in diphthonging *i*, *e*, and in Mercian *æ*, when *u*, or *o* (from earlier *-an*) followed in the next syllable, e.g. **heŏun* becomes *heofon*. The process is excellently described by Bülbring (*Elementarbuch*, § 229). What happened was that the *u* first 'lip-modified' the preceding consonant, which in its turn produced a lip- or rounded glide between itself and the preceding front vowel: **witum* became **wit^{w}um* and then **wi^{w}t^{w}um*, whence *wiutum*, and later *wiotum*, later still *weotum*.

In W. Saxon this mutation takes place only (*a*) when the word begins with *w*, or any consonant followed by *w*, *sw*, etc., in which case it occurs no matter what consonant intervenes between the *i* or *e* and the following *u*; or, (*b*) when the

intervening consonant is *l*, *r*, or a lip consonant—*p*, *m*, *f*. In words in which the *u* only occurs in certain cases—N. and Acc. Pl. Neuter, or Dat. Pl., Standard W. Saxon tends to give up the diphthongization, even in these cases, on the analogy of the undiphthongized forms of the other cases; thus *sċipu* (N. and Acc. Pl.) and *sċipum* (Dat. Pl.) 'ships', instead of *sċiopu* (*sċeopu*), etc., on the pattern of Sing. *sċip*, etc. The result is that this mutation is a far less prominent feature in W.S. than in any of the other dialects where no such tendency exists.

The *iu* and *eu* of this origin become *io*, and *eo*, and in West Saxon are both levelled under *eo* as a rule.

æ never undergoes the process in pure W.S., except in the word *ealu* 'ale', which is the Common O.E. form (from **aluþ-*); never in Northumbrian, and only sporadically in a few forms, in one or two early Kentish charters, where it is probably due to Mercian influence. In Mercian the *u*-mutation of *æ* (*a*) to *ea* is a typical feature of the dialect (§ 138).

Examples in W. Saxon:—*cweocu* fr. *cwiocu*, earlier *cwiucu* from *cwicu* 'living'; *ofor* 'wild boar' from **efur*; *heorot* 'hart', from **herut*, cp. O.H.G. *hiruz*; *seolfor* 'silver', earlier **siluƀr*; *sweostor* 'sister', cp. O.H.G. *swester*.

NOTE. The combination *wiu* becomes *wu*, the *w* being lost after a consonant before *u*, so that we get *c(w)ucu*; *wudu* from *widu* <*wiudu*, *wuton* <**wiutum*, etc., in all dialects except Kentish (§ 143). The type *cwic-*, on the analogy of *cwice*, occurs also in the form *cwicu*. This type not being diphthongized, does not change further, so that we find *cwicu*, *cucu*, and by a further cross analogy, also *cuce*, etc., at one and the same time.

§ 111. (8) 'Palatal Mutation'.

This term was suggested by Bülbring to denote primarily the loss in Anglian of the second element of the diphthong *ea* (which thus appears merely as *e*) before the consonant-groups *ht*, *hs*, *hþ*, when followed by a front vowel, or when final.

A very similar, though later process, affects also *eo*, *io*, in W. Sax., where we find *cniht* or *cnieht* 'boy', 'servant', instead of the normal, *cneoht* (as we might expect) from **cneht* with Fracture (§ 102). Here *eo* is fronted, and the first element raised to *i*. This only happens when the *-ht* is final, as in Nom.-Acc. Sing., or when a front vowel follows, as in Gen. and Dat. Sing. *cni(e)htes*, *cni(e)hte*; in the Pl. where back vowels occur in the suffixes, *eo* remains—*cneohtas*, *cneohta*, *cneohtum*; *Pihtisċ* 'Pictish' but *Peohtas* 'Picts'.

NOTE. This is an important difference for the subsequent development of the language, since Mod. Engl. *knight* can only be derived from the O.E. *cniht* type, and not from *cneoht-*.

§ 112. (9) **Loss of h, between vowels and contraction of vowel groups.**

Early in the historical period *h* disappears between vowels; thus **fōha* 'seize' becomes **fōa*, **sleaha* 'I strike' becomes **sleaa*, **feohes* (Gen. Sing. of *feoh*) 'property' becomes **feoes*, etc. These combinations of vowels are simplified by the loss of the unstressed vowel, but the remaining vowel or diphthong is lengthened, if short, thus: **fōa* becomes *fō*; **sleaa* becomes *slēa*; **feoes* becomes *fēos*, etc.; **þīhan* 'thrive' becomes **þīohan*, whence **þioan*, *þīon*.

Vowel Lengthening in O.E.

§ 113. (*a*) **Lengthening replaces Nasalization.**

We have seen (§ 100) that when the combinations *an-*, *am-* stand before *s*, *f*, or *þ*, the nasal consonant is lost, having previously nasalized the *a*, which is then rounded, and subsequently lengthened in compensation for the later loss of nasalization. Precisely the same nasalization, loss of nasal consonant, and gradual replacing of the vowel nasalization by vowel length, takes place when *i* or *u* stand before *n*, or *m*, followed by a voiceless open consonant. Nasalized *ĩ* and *ũ* before *h*, inherited from Germanic (cp. *ą̃*, §§ 98 and 100, Note), are lengthened in the same way. Examples: *sīþ* 'time, journey', fr. **sĩþ* fr. **sinþ*, Goth. *sinþs*; *ġesīþ* 'companion', O.H.G. *gisindi*; *fīf*, fr. **fimf*, cp. Goth. *fimf*, O.H.G. *fimf*, O. Sax. *fīf*; *ūs* 'us', O.H.G. *uns*; *cūþe* 'could', cp. Goth. *kunþa*.

Examples of *ĩh*, *ũh*: O.E. *þēon* 'thrive', fr. **þiɣχan*—**þĩχan*, Pr. O.E. *þīhan*, *þīōhan*, etc. (§ 112); O.E. *puhte* 'seemed', fr. **puɣχta*—**þũχta*, Pret. of *þyn̆can*, fr. **puɣk-jan*.

§ 114. (*b*) Short vowels were lengthened before the combinations *nd*, *mb*, (*ng* ?), *ld*, *rd*: *findan*, *lāmb*, *sīngan* (?), *cīld*, *wōrd*, all of which had, originally, short vowels. The lengthening which took place, probably, early in the ninth century is of importance for the later history of the language, for Mod. [faind, tʃaild, koum], etc., can only be explained by assuming that the O.E. forms had long vowels. On the numerous cases such as *end*, *friend*, *wind*, where the Mod. forms presuppose short forms, at any rate in M.E., see § 175 (7), below.

Sound Changes which occur only in West Saxon.

§ 115. (1) Diphthonging after initial Front Consonants.

After the *Front Consonants* *ċ*, *ġ* (whether earlier *g*, or *j*) and the combination *sċ* the Pr. O.E. vowels *æ*, *ǣ*, *e* are diphthongized, in the earliest period, to *ea*, *ēa*, *ie* respectively.

(*a*) After *ċ*: W. Saxon *ċeaster* 'city', etc. non-W. Sax. *ċæster*; *ċeaf* 'chaff', non-W.S. *ċæf*; *ċēace* from **ċǣce*, cp. Dutch *kaak*. There are no examples of *ċe-*.

(*b*) After *ġ* (=*g*): *ġeat* 'gate', non-W.S. *ġæt*; *ġeaf*, non-W.S. *ġæf*; *ġēafon* 'gave', Pret. Pl., Pr. O.E. *ġǣfon*; *ġielp* 'boast', cp. O.H.G. *gelf*, non-W.S. *ġelp*; *forġieldan* 'to pay for', non-W.S. *-ġeldan*: *ġ* = *j*—*ġēar* 'year', O.H.G. *jār*, Pr. O.E. *ġǣr*.

(*c*) After *sċ*: *sċeal* 'shall', earlier *sċæl*, Goth. *skal*; *sċēap* 'sheep', earlier *sċǣp*, cp. O.H.G. *scāf*; *sċieran* 'cut', cp. O.H.G. *sceran*.

NOTE 1. In Late W.S. *ĕă* is frequently monophthongized to *ĕ* after front cons., so that we get *ċef*, *ġef*, *ġēr*, *scēp*, etc. This does not take place before a following back vowel, so *ġēara*, *ġēarum*, etc., remain.

NOTE 2. The W.S. form *ċeaster* shows that the processes of fronting *c* before front vowels, and the subsequent diphthongization of this vowel after a front cons., were still in operation, if they did not actually begin after the English came to Britain, since *ċeaster* is a Latin loan-word first acquired from Latin-speaking people in this country.

NOTE 3. The above process of diphthongization is later than that caused by Fracture, as may be seen from O.E. *ċeorl* 'churl' from earlier *ċerl*. The *eo*, which occurs in all the dialects, is the result of Fracture. Had **ċerl* remained unaltered until the period of diphthongization after front cons. this must have become **ċierl* in W.S.

§ 116. (2) i-, j-Mutation of the Pr. O.E. Diphthongs ēa, īo.

In W.S. alone, of all the O.E. dialects, *ēa* and *īo* when followed by *-i-* or *-j-*, are mutated to *īe*: (*a*) I. **of ēa from au**: *hīeran* 'hear', from **hēārjan*, cp. Goth. *hausjan*; *ġelīefan* 'to believe', cp. O.E. *ġelēafa* 'faith', Goth. *galaubjan*; *īeðe* adv. 'easily', from **eāði*, cp. O.E. adj. *ēaðe* 'easy'; II. **of ēa from ǣ (W.Gmc. ā) after front consonant**:—*ċīese* 'cheese' from **ċēāsi*, from **ċǣsi*, W.Gmc. **kāsjō*.

NOTE. The W.S. form *ċīese* shows that *i*-mutation was a later process than that of diphthonging after front cons. (§ 115). Had the former process taken place earlier than the latter, Pr. O.E. **ċǣsi* would have remained unchanged by it, since *ǣ* suffers no i-mutation. *ċǣsi* then would have become **ċēāsi* in W.S. The short diphthong *ie* in *ċietel*, etc., below (§ 117) tells the same story.

(*b*) Mutation of *īo*:—*cīesþ* 'chooses' 3rd Sing. Pres. of *ċēosan*, from *ċīosiþ*; *flīes* 'fleece' from **flīūsi*; *ġetrīewe* 'faithful', cp. O. Sax. *gitriuwi*.

§ 117. (3) **-i-Mutation of the Short Diphthongs.**

The short diphthongs, *ĕa*, *ĭo*, no matter what their origin, become *ĭe* in W. Sax. through the influence of a following *-i-* or *-j-*.

(*a*) **Mutation of ĕa: I. of ĕa, the result of Fracture** (§ 102): *ierm̆þu* 'poverty, wretchedness', from **earmiþu*, earlier **ærmiþu*, cp. O.H.G. *armida*; *fiellan* 'cause to fall, cast down', from **fealljan*, cp. *feallan* 'to fall'; *nieht* 'night', from **neahti*, earlier **næhti*, cp. Goth. *nahts*, stem **nahti-*; **II. of ea from æ after front consonants** (§ 115): *ċietel* 'kettle', from **ċeatil*, earlier **ċætil*, cp. Goth. *katils*; *ċiele* 'cold, chill', from **ċeali*, from **ċæli*, cp. O.E. *ċeal-d* 'cold'; *ġiest* 'stranger', from **ġeasti*, earlier *ġæsti*, cp. Goth. *gasts*, stem *gasti-*; *sċieppan* 'create', from **sċeappjan*, cp. Goth. *skapjan*; *sċiell* 'shell', from **sċeallj-*.

§ 118. (*b*) **Mutation of ĭo (iu), the result of Fracture:** *wierþ* 'becomes', from **wiorþiþ* 3rd Sing. Pres. of *weorþan*; *hierde* 'shepherd', from **hiurdi*, **hiordi*, earlier **hirdi*, O.H.G. *hirti*; *ġesiehþ* 'sight', from *-*siohiþu* from *-*sihiþō*.

§ 119. **Later treatment of W.S. ĭĕ.**

Already in Alfred's time, *i* is often written for *ĭe*, no matter what the origin of this: *niht*, *cniht*, *sillan* (earlier *siellan*, from *sellan*), etc., and *ie* for original *i*, thus *wietan*, etc., for *witan*. This points to the conclusion that, at any rate in part of the W. Sax. area, *i* and *ie* had both been levelled under the one sound *i*. On the other hand, after and before *r*, *i* often appears as *y*, so that for instance *ryht* 'right' from *riht* > *rieht* > *reoht* is the regular Early W. Sax. form of this word.

In other parts of the W. Sax. area, on the other hand, *ĭ̆ĕ* is not levelled under *ĭ̆* but kept distinct, until in Late W.S. it is rounded to *y̆*, which does not happen to original *i*. Thus in those Late W.S. texts which we possess, *y̆* is the typical spelling, on the whole, for the earlier *ĭ̆ĕ* in all words of the classes illustrated in § 117. 3, above. Furthermore as in M.E. the [*y̆*] sounds are still preserved in these words, in the Saxon area, we must assume that the change of *ĭ̆ĕ* to *y̆* was typical of this area generally, although Alfred's forms do not in all cases appear to be consistent with this assumption. In Alfred's dialect, apparently, there was a tendency, already noted, of levelling *ĭ̆ĕ* under *ĭ̆*, which was not characteristic of the whole Saxon speech area.

NOTE. *ĭĕ* and *ĭ̄ĕ* are typical E. W.S. sounds, and occur in no other

dialect. Further, that *y̆* representing earlier *ĭĕ*, or anything else than the *i̯*-Mutation of *ŭ*, occurs in W.S. alone.

§ 120. Pr. O.E. ǣ in W.Sax.

With regard to this sound, it is perhaps desirable to record the negative fact that it undergoes no alteration in the Saxon area, during the whole O.E. period, and indeed remains as a characteristic Southern English (with the exclusion of Kentish) in the M.E. period (§§ 161, 162). The other dialects have raised this *ǣ* (in *dǣd* 'deed', *sǣton*, pret. pl. of *sittan*, etc.) to *ē* before the period of the earliest documents. This non-W. Sax. *ē* was tense, cp. § 123.

NOTE. It is probable, however, that while the sound remained slack, it was raised to the mid [ē] in Late W. Sax. Ælfric very often writes *æ* for original *ǣ*, *dæriaþ* 'injures', *hæfe* 'weight', *Særegius* for *Sergius*, etc. He even writes *æ* for *ē* occasionally, *ġerǣfa*, *ġecwǣmde*, and I have noted *ġefrētwodon* for *ġefrǣtwodon*.

§ 121. Late West Saxon Treatment of weo-.

It is typical of L.W.S. that the combination *weo-*, whether the diphthong be the result of *Fracture*, or *u-Mutation*, becomes *wu-*: *wurþan* fr. *wcorþan*, *swurd* fr. *sweord*, *swustor* fr. *sweostor*, *c(w)ucu* fr. *cweocu*. A few cases of *wo-* occur in Alfred.

§ 122. Unrounding of O.E. y̆ (i-mutation of ŭ) in Late W.S.

In some L.W.S. texts, a tendency to unround O.E. *y̆* to *ĭ* before front consonants and *n* is observable. This is found more particularly in Ælfric's Grammar and in the Old Testament, though in the latter the *i*-forms are not quite universal. The unrounded forms are less numerous in the W.S. Gospels, and still less so in Wulfstan's Homilies. The Patois texts, Blickling Homilies and Harleian Gloss, generally preserve the rounded vowel before front consonants. The words *cyning*, *cynn*, and *drighten* appear fairly consistently, however, as *cinn*, *cining*, *drihten*.

It is clear that the unrounding tendency did not obtain over the whole W.S. area in the Late O.E. period, and this is confirmed by the M.E. forms. In this period, *brugge*, *rugge*, etc., often appear in Sthn. texts, but the *i*-forms seem to be universal in *drihten*, *king*, *cyng*, etc.

NOTE. *u* in M.E. *brugge*, etc., is a Norm.-Fr. symbol for the [y] sound (§§ 152, 158 (*c*), below).

Points in which all the non-W. Sax. dialects agree.

§ 123. (1) **Raising of Pr. O.E. ǣ to ē.**

As just noted in § 120, Northumbrian, Mercian, and Kentish all raise *ǣ* to *ē*. Thus all have *sēton*, W. Sax. *sǣton*, 'they sat'; *rēd* 'council', W.S. *rǣd*; *sċēp*, *mēd*, *strēt*, etc., *ġēr* from *ġǣr*, W.S. *ġēar* (§ 115 (*b*)); *dēd* 'deed', W.S. *dǣd*; *grēdiġ* 'greedy', W.S. *grǣdiġ*, etc., etc. This change can be traced in Kentish at the end of the seventh century.

§ 124. (2) **i-, j-Mutation of Pr. O.E. ēa.**

Here again, all dialects except W.S. have *ē*: *hēran* 'hear', W.S. *hīēran*; *ġelēfan*, 'believe', W.S. *ġelīēfan*; *tēman* 'to teem, to bring forth', W.S. *tīēman*, from **tēamjan*, cp. O.E. *tēam* 'progeny'.

NOTE. The process whereby we have *ē* in non-W.S. instead of a diphthong is not clear. Was there a stage *ie* as in W.S., which was subsequently monophthongized? Or is it possible that the original diphthong when followed by *-i-* or *-j-* was monophthongized before the period of Mutation?

§ 125. (3) **Frequency of Back-Mutation of e and i.** (See § 110 above.)

All the non-W.S. dialects show a tendency to diphthongize *i* and *e* when followed by a back vowel, especially *u*, to an extent which is unknown in the literary dialect of Wessex. The results of the process are most fully developed in Kentish (see § 141), but the Anglian dialects also have them with great frequency, limited indeed only by smoothing (§ 127), which eliminates the second element of the diphthong. The non-W.S. dialects, unlike W.S., do not get rid of the diphthongized forms of words in favour of those without mutation, which may occur in particular cases of nouns, or parts of verbs. On the contrary, they tend rather to generalize the diphthongized forms as much as possible.

W.S. eliminates such a form as *ġeofu* 'gift', which is perfectly normal, in favour of *ġiefu* formed on the analogy of *ġiefe*, whereas Kentish tends to have the diphthongized forms everywhere: e.g. *beġeotan*, *seondan*, *sioudan* 'are', *aġiaban* 'to give', *weada* 'woods', *sioððan* 'after', *siolf* (analogy of Dat. Pl. *seolfum*, etc.) 'self', etc., etc. All these are from Kentish Charters in the first half of the ninth century.

The so-called Saxon Patois of the Blickling Homilies also has the diphthongized forms to a far greater extent than the Court dialect of Alfred.

The Anglian Dialects.

Features common to both Northumbrian and Mercian.

§ 126. (1) Absence of Fracture of æ, which appears as ā, before ll and l + consonant.

Anglian *cāld* 'cold', W.S. *ċeald*; *hāldan* 'hold', W.S. *healdan*; *wall* 'wall', W.S. *weall*; *bāld* 'bold', W.S. *beald*, etc.

[Fracture of æ before the *r*-combinations is not found so consistently in Anglian as in W.S. Before *h*, etc., Fracture takes place originally, but the diphthong is simplified again (see § 127 below).

The *i*-, *j*-mutation of *a* before *ll* or *l* + cons. in Anglian, is *æ*—*fællan*, W.S. *fiellan* (§ 117). Nthmb. *wærma* 'to warm' is probably to be regarded as = **warmjan*, with mutation of *a* to *æ*.]

§ 127. (2) Smoothing.

This is the name given by Sweet to the monophthongization of all diphthongs, both long and short, which took place in Primitive Anglian before *back*, and *front* consonants. *ēu̯*, *īu̯* become *ĕ̄*, *ĭ̄*; instead of *ēā*, before back and front consonants, we get first *æ̆̄* and later *ĕ̄*. O.E. *ēā* was developed out of earlier *au* (§ 97 (3)) through the stages *æu*, *æo*, *æa*, and the short *ea* had a similar development. These diphthongs appear to have been overtaken by the Smoothing process while they were at the *æo* stage. The *ǣ* which results from the smoothing of the long diphthong is still found as a rule in eighth-century texts, but is later raised to *ē*. Thus the earliest (Moore) MS. of Bede has *lǣch*, whereas the later MSS. have *lēch* in the same passage; the Epinal Glossary has forms like *laec* 'vegetable', W.S. *lēāc*; *aec* 'also', W.S. *ēāc*; *herebāēcon* 'military standard', W.S. *bēācen*, while the ninth-century Leiden Riddle has *hēh-* 'high', W.S. *hēāh*; *suæðēh* 'however', W.S. *-ðēāh*. In the late Mercian Psalter and Hymns, *ē* is the commoner spelling—*hēh*, *ġēċnað* 'increases', *bilēc* 'locked', W.S. *beleac*, etc. The Lindisfarne Gospels have *hēh*, *bēcon*, *ēcan*, *ēc*, etc., but the more archaic spelling *ǣc* for the last word is far commoner.

The short *æ*, smoothing from *ĕa*, is usually not raised to *e*, cp. *dægas*, Pl. fr. **deagas* by back-mutation from **dægas* (§ 110), in the Mercian Hymns, and *middilsæxum* in an eighth-century Merc. Charter. Pr. O.E. *æ̆* remains in Nthumb. but becomes *e* in Merc.; cp. § 137 below.

§ 128. (3) Retention of ōē.

The *i*-mutation of *ō*, originally *ōē* in all dialects (§ 105, above) remains in the spelling, and probably in the pronunciation, of

the Anglian dialects throughout the O.E. period—*bōc̄*, W.S. *bēc̄* 'books', *sōc̄an*, W.S. *sēc̄an* 'to seek'.

(On *oe* in Kentish see § 144.)

Features which distinguish Northumbrian from Mercian.

§ 129. (1) **Retention of Pr. O.E. æ̆** as in W.S. (§ 97 above), whereas the Mercian dialect of Vespas. Ps. agrees with Kentish in raising this to *e* (§ 137 below).

§ 130. (2) **Traces of late Diphthonging after front consonants.** This is unknown in Mercian and Kentish, but characteristic of W.S., where, however, it is a primitive process. The Northumbrian process has been discussed with some minuteness by Bülbring, *Anglia*, Beibl. ix, and *Elementarbuch*, §§ 154, 155, 294–6, 302.

In Rushw.[2] *sċeal* 'shall', as in W.S., is found, and *sċīp* 'sheep' which according to Bülbring, § 154, is from **sċīep* with diphthongization of the Angl. *sċēp*, Pr. O.E. *sċǣp*.

NOTE. This is surely later than the W.S. process, since it is later than the Angl. raising of *ǣ* to *ē*, though doubtless, as Bülbring says, much earlier than the Nthmb. diphthonging of *back* vowels after *sċ*.

The clearest cases of the diphthonging of back vowels in (Nthn.) Nthmb. are found after *sċ*, and must be very late, indicating a rising diphthong, i. e. one stressed on second element, if we take them seriously as diphthongal forms—*sċeān* 'shone', earlier *sċān*, pret. sing. of *scīnan*, *sċeacca* 'to shake', *sċeōh* 'shoe', etc. The *e* in all these forms may be merely a graphic device to indicate that *sċ* is front.

§ 131. (3) **Absence of back-Mutation of æ** (found in Mercian, § 138).

§ 132. (4) **Distinction preserved between e͡o and i͡o.**

In W. Sax. the old diphthong *īo* (Pr. O.E. *iu*) which only arose in W. Gmc. when *-i-* or *-j-* followed, became *īe* in the Mutation period unless there was a change of suffix (§ 118). In Anglian, no alteration was effected in the sound by the following *-i-* and the diphthong is preserved as *īo* in O. Nthmb. and remains distinct from *ēo* from Pr. *eu*, whereas in Mercian *īo* is levelled under *ēo*: Nthmb. *ðīostro* 'darkness', W.S. *ðīestru*, O. Sax. *thiustri*; *ġestrīona* 'gain, beget children', W.S. *ġestrīenan*.

The same distinction is preserved in Nthmbr. between the short diphthongs *ĭo*, *ĕo*: *wiurþit* in Bede's Death Song, W.S. *wierþ* from **wiurþiþ* from **wirþiþ* by Fracture; *hiorde* 'shepherd', W.S. *hierde*; *iorre* 'angry', W.S. *ierre*; *ġiornede* 'desired',

W.S. *giernde*. (On the W.S. *īē*, later *ȳ*, in these forms, see §§ 118, 119, above.)

§ 133. (5) **Influence of initial w upon following vowels.**

The following changes are characteristic of late Nthmb.:

(*a*) *weo*-(Fracture)becomes *wo*-: *worða* 'become' from earlier *weorðan*, *worpa* 'throw' from *weorpan*, *sword* 'sword' from *sweord*.

(*b*) In **Nthn. Nthmb.** *weo*-, the result of *o*- or *u*-Mutation, also becomes *wo*-: *woruld* from *weoruld* from *weruld* 'world', *wosa* 'to be' from *weosan* from *wesan*. [According to Bülbring, § 267, in Sthn. Nthmb. *wosa* is the only form with *o* from *eo* as a result of *o*-Mutation; otherwise *weo*- remains—*weoruld*, etc.]

This change is quite unknown in Mercian and Kentish. In late W.S. a somewhat similar change, that of *weo*- to *wu*-, occurs (§ 121).

(*c*) Initial *we*- becomes *wæ*- through rounding of the vowel: *wæġ* 'way' from *weġ*, *cwæða* 'speak' from *cweðan* (but *cweoðan* becomes *cwoða* (cp. (*b*) above), *wæs* 'be' Imperat. from *wes*. [Not quite unknown in Mercian, where such forms as *cwoeðaþ*, *woestenne* 'solitudine', occur sporadically.]

(*d*) In **Late Nthn. Nthmb.** *wē*- (Anglian form of Pr. O.E. *wǣ*-) becomes *wā*-: *wāpen* 'weapon', W.S. *wǣpen*, *wāg* 'wave', W.S. *wǣg*.

[This change is unknown in Mercian.]

§ 134. (6) In **Southern Northumbrian,** W. Gmc. *au* (W. Sax. *ēā*) appears generally as *ēo*, being apparently arrested at the *ǣo* stage: *dēoþ* 'death', W.S. *dēaþ*; *dēof* 'deaf', W.S. *dēaf*; *hēofud*, W.S. *hēafod*; *ēore* 'ear', W.S. *ēare*, etc.

Nthn. Nthmb. more commonly writes *ēa*, as in all other dialects.

§ 135. (7) **Northern Nthmb.** writes *ea* more frequently for Fracture of *e* before *rr* and *r*+consonant than *eo*: *hearte* 'heart', W.S. *heorte*; *earðu* 'earth'. In the **Sthn. Nthmb.** texts, *eo* is more frequent.

[Mercian also shows some traces of *ea*, but *eo* is general.]

§ 136. (8) **Southern Nthmb.** of the later period, on the other hand, generally writes *eo* instead of *ea* for the Fracture of *æ̆*: *eorm* 'arm', *hweorf* 'turned, wandered', W.S. *hwearf*.

[In Mercian, as in Kentish, *eo* sometimes occurs for *ea*, but rarely.]

Characteristic Mercian Features.

§ 137. (1) **Raising of ӕ to ĕ.**

In distinction to Northumbrian and W.S., which retain *ӕ* throughout the O.E. period, but in agreement with Kentish, in part of the Mercian area this vowel is raised to *e* by an isolative change. This is most consistently shown in the ninth-century Vespasian Psalter and Hymns, and in the later Glosses in MS. Royal. The Mercian Matthew (Rushworth[1]), however, writes *æ* far more commonly. Examples (from Vesp. Ps. and Hymns) are: *hwet* 'what?', *deġes* (Gen. Sing. of *deġ* 'day', *deġum* (Dat. Pl. on analogy of Sing.), *efter* 'after', *weter* 'water', *wes* 'was'.

The forms *dægas*, *dæga*, *cwæcung* in Vesp. Hymns are examples of Anglian smoothing from **deaga*, etc. See § 138 below.

§ 138. (2) **Back-Mutation of Pr. O.E. æ.**

ġedeafenaþ 'befits', *iċ fearu* 'I go', *feadur* 'father' (Gen. Sing.), *ġehleadaþ* 'they load', *steaðelas* 'foundations'.

This mutation took place, in the dialect of the Vesp. Ps., also when *g*, or *c* was the intervening consonant, but such forms as **deagas*, **cweacung* 'shaking' were smoothed to *dægas*, etc. This smoothing of *ea* is the chief source of *ӕ* in this text.

§ 139. (3) **Levelling of ĭ̆ŭ, later ĭ̆ŏ, under ĕ̆ŏ.**

Vesp. Ps. has *weotaþ* (Imperat. Pl.) 'know ye' from *wiutaþ*, *cweoþaþ* 'they speak', *cleopiu* 'I call' from **clipōju*, whence **cliupōju*, *ċēōseþ* 'chooses' from **cīōsiþ*.

The same levelling occurs in the case of *ĭ̆ŏ* the result of Fracture of *ĭ*: *eorsian* 'become angry', *eorre* 'angry', *heorde*, W.S. *hierde* 'shepherd'.

NOTE. Such forms as *wreocende*, *spreocende* in Vesp. (Back-mutation of *e*), where we should expect Smoothing, must be due to the analogy of other verbs in the same class, where the diphthong normally remained unsmoothed, e.g. *beoran* 'bear', etc. *Stēōgun* 'climbed', from *stigun* (Pret. Pl.), may be explained on the analogy of *wrēōtun* 'they wrote'; but see also § 140 (2) below.

Typical Kentish Features.

§ 140. (1) **ӕ̄, the i-Mutation of Pr. O.E. ā raised to ē.**

Kentish is the only O.E. dialect which does not preserve this *ӕ̄* (in *clӕ̄ne*, etc.) unaltered during the whole O.E. period. Already in the Kentish Charters of the ninth century, we get forms such as *clēnra*, *ēniġ*, *mēst*, *ġemēnum* (Dat. Pl.)

'common', cp. Goth. *gamaini-*, and in the Surrey Charter of 871–89 *ġedēle*, W.S. *ġedǣlan* 'divide', Goth. *gadailjan*; *lēsten* 'perform', Goth. *galaistjan*; *hwēte-*, W.S. *hwǣte-* 'wheat', from **hwaiti-*, Pr. O.E. **hwāti*. This change can be shown to be distinctly later than the raising of Pr. O.E. *ǣ* (§ 123 above) to *ē* which is common to all non-W.S. dialects. The later Kentish Psalm and Hymn write *æ* for both sounds, but owing to the early disappearance of the sounds (*ǣ*) in Kentish, the symbols *æ* and *e* are used indifferently for the mid-front sound. That *æ* is indeed used for a mid-front vowel is shown by the spelling *hǣr* for *hēr* 'here' in a Kt. Ch. of 831. In this word no one supposes that any old dialect ever had other than a mid-front vowel. The same confusion is shown in the spelling *swæstar* for *swestor* 'sister', where the short mid-front is certain.

[On preservation of this *ē* in M.E. see § 161 below.]

§ 141. (2) Typical Kentish Back-Mutation.

We may consider such forms as *reogolweard* 'guardian of a (religious) rule', and *forespreoca* 'advocate', *brcogo* 'prince', as typically Kentish, since W.S. does not admit of this mutation before a back consonant, and, although it no doubt occurred under these conditions in early Anglian, it would be reduced by smoothing in the Anglian dialects (§ 127 above). Kentish influence may partly explain the forms in Vesp. Ps. discussed in § 138, note, above.

§ 142. (3) O.E. *y̆* (i-Mutation of *ŭ*), unrounded, and lowered to *ĕ*.

In the Late Kentish Psalm, we find *sennum* 'sins' (Dat. Pl.), W.S. *synnum*; *gelta* 'guilt', W.S. *gylt*; *grammhegdiġ* 'cruel', W.S. *-hygdiġ*; *snetera* 'wise', W.S. *snyter*, etc. In Early Kentish such spellings do not occur in *stressed* syllables, though the proper name *Heregēþ*, W.S. *-gȳþ* is found, but the change, even in stressed syllables, is assured for the early period by the spelling *yfter* 'after' in a Ch. of 831, to represent Kt. *efter*, W.S. *æfter*. This spelling would be impossible unless Kt. scribes had already pronounced O.E. *y* as *e* in words where they still adhered to the traditional spelling (*y*). If they pronounced *e* whenever they saw or wrote *y*, of course *y* might come to be regarded as a symbol for the *e*-sound.

ĕ̄, for original *y̆̄*, continues to be one of the chief marks of Kentish dialect, or Kentish influence during the M.E. period (§ 158 (*b*)), and we have in Standard English to-day, words like

knell, O.E. *cnyllan*, outside the Kentish dialect, which we know must be of Kentish or S. Eastern origin (§ 253, Note 3 below).

NOTE. This feature of Kentish extends in M.E. beyond the old Kentish area, and is found, in varying degrees, in Essex, Suffolk, and Sussex.

§ 143. (4) The group wiu.

In Kentish, the otherwise usual change to *wu* does not occur, so that we get *weada*, *wcotum*, instead of *wudu*, *wutum*. *Wudum* is found, however, in Bd. Gl.

The diphthongs *īŭ*, *ēŏ* are not clearly and consistently distinguished in Kt. *īo* is commoner in this dialect than *ēo* for earlier *eu*. For short *ĕŏ* and *ĭŏ* we find often *ia*, *io* by the side of *eo*: thus *scondan*, *siondon*, *weadu*, *gewriota*, *siodðan*, *niomanne*; *hiabanlic*, *begeotan*, *agiaban*, *-gecweodu*, etc.

§ 144. Treatment of ē (i-mutation of ō) in Kentish.

The ninth-century Charters consistently write *oe* for the *i*-mutation of *ō* of every origin—*fōe* 'take', *bōēc*, *dōēð*, *gōes* 'geese', *soeċende*, *ġerōefa* 'reeve', etc. The only exception seems to be *blēdsung*. Surrey Charter (879–89) has *oe* once, but usually writes *eo*—*fēo*, *ġefeorum* 'companions' (W.S. *ġefērum*), *seolest* 'best', *rehtmeodrencynn*. In later Kentish *e* is the usual spelling—*ġemēte*, *gebētte*, *sēċende*, etc. (Psalm). The spelling *sēōċan*, however, occurs once in this text. The Late Kt. Glosses always write *ē*.

The spelling *eo*, occurring already in the latter half of the ninth century, seems to show that the traditional spelling *oe* was no longer felt as satisfactory, and may imply that the vowel was already but slightly rounded. It is curious that *eo* should crop up again in Late Kt. We can hardly take it to represent a rounded vowel, in the face of the far more numerous *ē*-spellings. The spelling *bōēm* 'both' Dat. Pl., which occurs in a Ch. of 831, compared with *bǣm* in 805, shows clearly that even at this date *oe* could represent an unrounded vowel, and the spelling *hǣr* for *hēr* 'here' shows that *ǣ* could represent the mid-front vowel. It seems probable that by the year 831, the old vowel *ōē* had already been unrounded in Kt. A form with slight rounding may have survived longer in Surrey.

§ 145. Summary of Chief Dialectal Characteristics in O.E.

It will be convenient to summarize briefly the principal features which distinguish the O.E. dialects. The following list includes only those which are of importance for the

subsequent history of the language. A few examples are added to make the statement concrete.

(1) **Diphthonging after front consonants**: *sċeal*, *ġiefan*, *ċief*, *ġeat*, etc. (§ 115). In L.W.S. the *ĕ̄ā* are monopthongized to *ĕ̄*: *sċel*, *ċef*, etc.

[This process of diphthonging is confined to W. Saxon.]

(2) **i- or j-Mutation of Diphthongs ĕ̄ā, ĕ̄ō to īe** [only in W.S.]: *ierm̥þu*, *hīerde* 'heard'; *cīesþ* 'chooses', *wierþ* 'becomes'. In late W.S. these *ĭ̄ĕ̄* become *ў̄*: *yrm̥þu*, *hў̄rde*, etc. (§§ 116–19).

(3) **Survival of Primitive O.E. ǣ** (W.Gmc. *ā*) [survives only in W.S.]: *sǣton*, *strǣt*, *dǣd*, etc., etc. (§ 120).

(4) **Survival of Primitive O.E. ă̈** [W.S. and Northumbrian, and part of Mercian area]: *glæd*, *dæġ*, *wæs*, etc., etc. (§§ 97, 129, 137).

(5) **Change of ў̆ (i-Mutation of ŭ) to ĕ** [Kentish only]: *senn*, W.S. *synn*; *fēr* 'fire', W.S. *fўr*, etc., etc. (§ 142).

(6) **Absence of Fracture of æ (ă) before ll or l+another consonant** [typically Anglian]: *all*, W.S. *eall*; *āld* 'old', W.S. *eald*; *cāld* 'cold', W.S. *ċeald*, etc., etc. (§ 126).

(7) **Smoothing of all Diphthongs before c, ċ, g, ġ, h** [typically Anglian]: *hǣh*, W.S. *heāh*; *lēht* 'light', W.S. *lēoht* (§ 127).

(8) **Diphthonging of O.E. ă̈ to eă, by u-Mutation** [Mercian only]: *feadur*, *steaðelas* from **staðulas* (§ 138).

(9) **Raising of Primitive ǣ (W.Gmc. ā) to ē** [all dialects except W.S.]: *sēton*, *strēt*, *dēd* (§ 123).

(10) **Raising of ǣ (i-Mutation of Pr. O.E. ā) to ē** [found only in Kentish]: *dēlan*, W.S. *dǣlan* (§ 140).

CHAPTER VI

HISTORY OF ENGLISH SOUNDS

II. The Middle English Period

§ 146. The number of literary works composed and written down during the M.E. period, that is, between, roughly, 1100 and 1450, is extremely large, and many of the individual works are of great length. M.E. literature is of the most varied character. Every kind of composition, in prose and verse, is represented; the religious treatise, the legal document, the lyric, the romance, history, serious narrative, satire, comedy, the sublime, the ridiculous, the grave, the gay; every note in the lyre of human passion is struck, every phase of human experience is portrayed. Almost every area, from Aberdeen to Sussex, except perhaps the Central Midlands, is represented by one or more works written in the local form of English.

Materials therefore are not lacking for the adequate study of our language, in all its forms, during the 350 years which begin within half a century of the Norman Conquest, and end fifty years after the death of Chaucer.

§ 147. **The Norman Conquest.**

This great event, while it undoubtedly marks a new departure in many ways in our social and political history, is by no means such a revolutionary factor in the history of our language as some writers would lead one to believe. Its main effects are seen in our vocabulary. While the M.E. period is characterized by far-reaching sound changes, which we think of as beginning soon after the Norman Conquest, there is every reason for believing that the germ of the tendencies which first find graphic expression at this time existed already long before, and that the linguistic phenomena which become noticeable in the texts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are the natural heritage of the past. In fact, there is no ground for assuming that the history of English sounds would have been other than we know it, had the Norman Conquest

never taken place. The external form and the internal structure of English have undergone continuous, but gradual change, from the earliest times to the present day. The Norman Conquest did not sever the continuity and begin a new era. We are to consider the changes in sounds and inflexions which we associate with the M.E. period, not as due in any way to the great historical cataclysm which befell in 1066, but as the natural outcome of forces that were at work long before Duke William was born, which can be traced to some extent in the texts of the late O.E. period.

§ 148. Apparent increased rate of change in Early Transition English.

If we examine the language of the latter parts of the Peterborough Chronicle which were written down about seventy to ninety years after the coming of the Normans, and compare it with that of the Charters written in the reign of Edward the Confessor (1043–66) or of William's English Charters, we are struck by certain obvious differences. The Charters are, to all intents and purposes, good Old English, showing to a superficial view but little difference from the language of Alfred, still less from that of Ælfric. The language of the Chronicle, during the last eighty or ninety years of the record, is something very different. Not only has the conventional O.E. spelling been largely given up in favour of what appear tentative efforts to express quite a different pronunciation, but the inflexions are greatly impaired; for instance, we get the indeclinable definite article, in such constructions as *of þe king*, we find a new personal pronoun *scæ*, the ancestor of the modern *she*, instead of *heo*, and the structure of the sentence is often very different from the old usage. As we note all the differences, we might be inclined to ask whether these considerable changes in the language, which have come about with such apparent suddenness, must not be attributed to some great event such as the Norman Conquest, which has upset society from top to bottom, and reacted upon the language. Why, it might reasonably be asked, has English suddenly changed more, in less than a hundred years, than it did during the three hundred and fifty years before 1066?

The answer is not far to seek. The Norman Conquest did not, indeed, produce a sudden change in the language itself, but it did cause the death, or nearly so, of literary tradition. The spoken language, we must suppose, had outgrown and gone beyond the written forms that we find in Ælfric and in

the late charters. But the scribes were strongly conservative, and adhered to the old methods of spelling which represented approximately the facts of the language as pronounced, perhaps, a hundred years earlier, but had long ceased to give a true picture of contemporary speech. In the same way, the style and structure of the sentence, in literary works, was based upon the older models found in writings, and not upon that of the colloquial language. We may assume, perhaps, that in the latter respect, the same kind of difference, only on a more extensive scale, existed between the style of the written and spoken language, in late O.E., as is seen at the present time, when we write *is it not, will I not, were it not for that, the Misses Smith*, whereas in ordinary colloquial speech we say [*iznt it*, wount *ai*, *if it* wɔznt fə ðæt, ðə *mis*ɨz smiþs] and so on. But soon after the Conquest, English learning sank to a very low ebb. The great prelates, the Bishops and Abbots, were Normans; the language and literature of the English, regarded as belonging to a rude and boorish race, were no longer objects of solicitude for the learned. The art of writing, no doubt, was hardly practised by Englishmen, or only by the more aristocratic who had the opportunity of acquiring the language of the dominant race. Documents were but rarely written in English. The continuity of literary English prose style was broken. When Englishmen again took up the pen, after more than half a century of neglect, and attempted to set down their thoughts on parchment, they had to create afresh an English prose style. What models had they? The documents of the age which was gone, of the time when English letters still flourished, were now hopelessly antiquated in style, and too far removed from actual facts to serve as models. The old traditional spelling, much behind the time even in the days of Ælfric, was still less adapted to the requirements of twelfth-century English. The only thing to do was to put the thoughts, as far as possible, into the form of sentence used in the ordinary spoken language, and to adapt, in some way or other, what remained of a traditional mode of rendering sounds to the changed conditions of pronunciation.

Such considerations as these enable us to understand that the apparent gulf between pre-Conquest English, and that of the period immediately following that event, is not a reality, but that the appearance is a natural result of the conditions inseparable from the graphic representation in the latter period of a language whose literary cultivation had long been neglected. It is perhaps worth while to point out here that the documents of the Early Transition period probably

present a far more faithful picture of the spoken language of the time, than do the writings of an age of highly developed literary activity, based on a powerful tradition.

§ 149. Variety of Dialectal Types in M.E.

It is constantly pointed out, and indeed it strikes at once every student who makes the most superficial survey of M.E. documents, that compared with the four or five well-marked types of English which appear in the pre-Conquest sources, there is an extraordinary richness of dialect types preserved in M.E. It would be very wrong to draw the inference from this fact, that the process of dialectal differentiation was more active after, than before the Conquest, and that a host of new varieties of English came into being in the later periods.

The comparative uniformity of O.E. as we know it in the written documents must be explained by the strength of W. Saxon scribal tradition, which levelled many slightly differing forms of speech under a single type for literary purposes. No such check existed, for a long time, in the M.E. period. Every writer was largely a law unto himself, and while he no doubt owed something to the gradually hardening tradition of spelling, he felt free to try experiments of his own. The spelling of Orm (fl. 1200) is an example of highly developed individualism, for which the whole of Old and Middle English offers no parallel. The M.E. scribes do full justice to the variety of regional dialects which undoubtedly existed, and they also, by the individualism of their methods, probably suggest a variety greater than really existed. We do not often find complete consistency in the spelling of a single text, therefore when we compare that of several writers of the same period, we may mistake for variety of dialect what is really an experimental groping after the best way of writing the same sound.

§ 150. Difficulties in the Investigation of M.E. Texts.

It is highly important for the study of M.E. to be sure of the precise or approximate date of the text we are dealing with, and also of the dialect which it represents. There are two possibilities which may occur to give a wrong impression of the language of a given time, or of a particular area. (1) A MS. may be a copy of another and much earlier text. In this case, the scribe sometimes follows his model with exactitude, and reproduces accurately the forms of a bygone age, but he sometimes also forgets to do this, and writes

down the forms of his own day. Or such a text may be written mainly according to the usage of the scribe's own time with only an occasional lapse into the archaism of the text which he is copying. It is clearly necessary to decide, in such cases, which forms really belong to the period of the MS. itself, and which to that of the original.

(2) A text may be copied by a scribe whose native or habitual dialect is different from that in which the text is written. In this case, the scribe sometimes follows his text, and sometimes introduces his own, perhaps quite different forms. The result is a mixture of dialect forms which may be quite incongruous. It is quite possible for modern students to be misled, in such cases, into taking for an example of a genuine dialect with a mixture of elements, what is in reality a mixture produced under the conditions just described.

In forming our view of what the speech of a particular area was like, at a particular period, it is desirable, in the first instance, to eschew texts of these two classes as much as possible, and to confine our inquiries to such texts whose date and place of origin are definitely known. Only with the experience gained in this way, shall we be in a position to distinguish chronological and regional discrepancies in documents.

§ 151. M.E. Spelling and M.E. Sounds.

It is essential to consider separately the actual sounds of M.E. and the various methods of expressing these graphically. A change in spelling does not necessarily imply a change in pronunciation, though of course it often does, and the retention of an older spelling unaltered does not necessarily prove that the sound remains the same. The history of English spelling is one thing, and the history of English pronunciation is quite another. From the point of view of the former it is of importance to record that O.E. *ū* in such words as *hūs*, *mūs*, etc., is written in M.E., owing to the habits of French scribes, *ou*. But this fact is of no importance for the history of the sound, since this remained the same [ū] for centuries after the new spelling was introduced, and when, in the fifteenth century, this sound was diphthongized, no further change was made in the mode of representing it. On the other hand, in tracing the history of sounds it is vital to state that the O.E. diphthong *ēa* in words like *deaþ*, *heap* 'crowd', etc., became [ǣ] before the end of the O.E. period (§ 97. 3, Note), although the spelling was often retained in the Early Transition and later periods.

Changes in Spelling which are purely Graphic.

§ 152. A. Vowels.

O.E. *y̆*. The O.E. high-front-tense-round, so far as it survived in M.E. (cp. § 158 (*c*)), is never written *y* after the twelfth century, e.g. H. Rd. Tree, but with the French symbol *u*. When long, it is frequently expressed by *ui*: e.g. *sunn*, 'sin', O.E. *synn*; *muchel* 'great', O.E. *myċel*; *huiren* vb. 'hear', Late O.E. *hȳran*; *fuir* 'fire', O.E. *fȳr*.

O.E. *ū*. In order to distinguish this from old *ȳ*, now often spelt *u*, it is written habitually *ou* by French scribes, and later, by every one: e.g. *hous*, O.E. *hūs*; *bour* 'dwelling', O.E. *būr*.

O.E. *ŭ*. In the neighbourhood of *v*, *u*, *w*, *n*, *m*, this sound, which remained unchanged, is often written *o*, purely for the sake of distinctness to the eye, e.g. *sone*, 'son', O.E. *sunu*; *comen* P.P. 'come', O.E. *cumen*. In N.Fr. old *-on* had become [un] in pronunciation.

§ 153. B. The Consonants.

O.E. *c* = back voiceless stop, generally preserved initially, before back vowels: *cot*, *comen* 'come', but written *k* before front vowels: *king*, *kēpen* 'keep'. Doomsday Book, entirely the work of foreign scribes, constantly writes *ch* for initial *c* (k) in English names, e.g. *Chenulueslei*, O.E. *Cenwulfeslēah* 'Knowsley'. *ch* in D.B. always stands for the back voiceless stop.

Medially, and finally, this sound is written *k*, *ck*, *c*.

The O.E. combination *cw* is written with the French symbol *q*+*u*, hence *queen*, O.E. *cwēn*, etc. *ku*, *cu*, etc., are also written.

O.E. *ċ*. As early as the twelfth century, some Sthn. texts write *ch* for this sound, in all positions—*chald* 'cold'; *sēchen* 'seek', O.E. *sēċan*; *ich* 'I', O.E. *iċ*. The earliest Transition texts still write *c*. In later M.E. *cch* and *tch* are written medially—*wretche*, *lacchen* 'catch'.

O.E. ȝ or ʒ. These are the only forms of the letter used in O.E., but the latter part of the Peterborough Chronicle, written in the twelfth century, uses what is known as the Continental form of the letter, which is approximately that of our *g*. The Chronicle, and some other early Transition texts, e.g. Genesis and Exodus, use this symbol *g* exclusively for O.E. ȝ whether it expresses a back or front consonant, stop or open—so that we get even *gung* for O.E. *geong*.

Later on, the more careful scribes use *g* and a modified

form of O.E. ȝ, ȝ, and distinguish systematically between back and front sounds. The following are the typical M.E. ways of expressing the various sounds expressed by O.E. ȝ, and *ċġ*:

(1) **Back-open-voiced consonant** (O.E. ȝ) is written *gh*, and *ȝh*: *burgh*, O.E. *burg*; *laghe* 'law', O.E. *laȝu*, etc.

[This symbol (*gh*), as well as *h*, *hh*, is used also for the voiceless sound.]

(2) **Back Stop** (O.E. ȝ) is written *g*: *gōd*, *god* 'good', 'God', etc.

Orm, who was a mediæval spelling reformer, invented a special symbol ȝ for the stop, and uses it in words such as the above.

(3) **Front Stop** (O.E. *ċġ*). This only occurred medially and finally in O.E. words. In M.E. it is written *gg* by Orm and most other scribes, though sometimes *g* alone is written: *seggen* 'say', O.E. *sċġan*; *rugg*, O.E. *hryċġ* 'back'. In French words the sound occurred initially in such words as *juge* 'judge', and in these words the spelling *j* is generally retained, though *g* is occasionally written. When the sound occurs medially it was, in late M.E., not infrequently written *dg* as at the present day: *bridge*, etc.

(4) **Front-open-voiced consonant** (O.E. ȝ). The modified form ȝ of the O.E. symbol is used in a large number of texts quite systematically for this sound: *ȝer*, O.E. *ġēr* 'year'; *ȝeuen*, O.E. *ġefan* 'give', etc. Later M.E. texts use *y*—*yere*, etc.

O.E. f written v or u. This, as a systematic habit, was an innovation of the French scribes, though there are traces in some O.E. texts of *u* to express a voiced sound between vowels. In the Southern area of M.E. the O.E. *f* was voiced initially, and we consequently find such spellings as *vox*, *uox* 'fox', *vuir* 'fire', O.E. *fȳr*, with fair consistency. Medially, between vowels, the sound was voiced in all dialects, and we find therefore *uvel*, *ivel*, etc., O.E. *yfel* 'evil'; *ouer*, O.E. *ofer* 'over', etc. Since the forms of *u* and *v* were often confused, we constantly find such spellings as *vuel* 'evil' = [yvel] instead of *uvel*.

O.E. s written c. This is habitual in French words, and the usage is applied also to English words: *seldcene*, O.E. *seldsēne* 'rare'; *alce*, O.E. *alswa*.

O.E. voiced s written z. Spelling with initial *z* is typical of Kentish texts, in which dialect O.E. *s* must have been voiced in this position: *zayþ* 'says', O.E. *sċġ(e)þ*; *zoþe* 'true', O.E. *sōþ*, etc.

O.E. sċ is written sch, ss, sh: *schal, schencken* 'grant', *ssolde* 'should', *issote* 'shot', *shǣwenn*, etc.

The subject of M.E. spelling will be further dealt with later on in dealing specifically with the sounds themselves and their changes.

§ 154. Illustrative Middle English Texts.

The following select list of M.E. texts will be found fairly representative of the various dialects and periods. Most of them are referred to in the account given below of the development of Sounds and Accidence in M.E. A useful illustrative selection of texts, dating from 1150 to 1390. is contained in Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, Parts I and II, and others in MacLean's *Old and Middle English Reader*, Macmillan, 1893. Scotch texts, though mainly of the Early Modern Period, are well illustrated in Gregory Smith's *Specimens of Middle Scots*, Blackwood, 1902. Valuable examples of Late M.E. and early Mod. texts (1384–1579) are to be found in Skeat's *Specimens of English Literature*.

Most of the texts enumerated below are published by the Early English Text Society; when this is not the case, it will be indicated. When selections occur in any of the above collections, this is also indicated. Several very important Early M.E. texts are contained in *An Old English Miscellany*, ed. R. Morris, E.E.T.S., 1872; and the chief groups of Early M.E. Homilies are to be found in two vols. known as *Old English Homilies*, 1st and 2nd Series, E.E.T.S., 1868 and 1873 respectively, by the same editor. The presence of a text in either of these collections is indicated by the words *O.E. Homs.*, or *O.E. Misc.* placed after the name in the list.

A. M.E. Northern Texts.

Northern Legends. 1275. Ed. Horstmann, 1881.

Nthn. Metrical Psalter. Before 1300. Surtees Society, 1843–47. Extracts in Specimens.

Cursor Mundi. 1300. Extracts in Specimens, and MacLean's Reader.

Nthn. Metrical Homilies. 1330. Ed. Small, Edinburgh, 1862. Extracts in Specimens.

Richd. Rolle de Hampole's Pricke of Conscience. Before 1349. Ed. R. Morris, 1863. Extracts in Specimens. Maetzner's ae. Sprachproben.

Minot's Songs. 1339–52. Ed. Scholle, Quellen und

Forschungen, lii, 1884, and Hall, Oxford. Extracts in Specimens.

B. Scotch Texts.

Barbour's Bruce. 1375. Ed. Skeat, E.E.T.S., 1870. Extracts in Specimens, and MacLean. (The oldest MS., G. 23, St. John's Coll., Cambridge, was not written till 1487.)

Ratis Raving. First half of fifteenth century. Ed. Lumby, E.E.T.S., 1870.

The Taill of Rauf Coilyear. 1456–81. Ed. S. J. H. Herrtage, E.E.T.S., 1882.

C. East Midland Texts.

Peterborough Chronicle. 1121–54. (Laud MS.) Plummer, Two A.-S. Chronicles. Extracts in Specimens.

Ormulum. 1200. Ed. White, 1852, 2 vols., and Holt, 1878, 2 vols. Extracts in Specimens.

Bestiary. Circa 1250. In O.E. Misc. Extracts in Specimens.

Genesis and Exodus. Circa 1250. Ed. Morris, E.E.T.S. Revised 1873. Extracts in Specimens.

Harrowing of Hell. Circa 1280–1300. Ed. E. Mall, Breslau, 1871.

Robt. of Brunne's Handlyng Synne. 1300-30. Ed. Furnivall, Roxburghe Club, 1862. Re-edited, Pt. I, 1901, Pt. II, 1903. Extracts in Specimens.

Havelok the Dane. 1300. Ed. Holthausen, Heidelberg, 1901; Skeat, Oxford, 1902. Extracts in Specimens.

Norfolk Guilds. 1839. In English Guilds, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, E.E.T.S., 1870.

Osbern Bokenam's Lives of Saints. Fl. 1370–1450. Ed. Horstmann, Heilbronn, 1883.

D. London Dialect.

Charter of London, by the King William the Conqueror (1066). In Liebermann, Gesetze d. Angelsachsen, i. 486.

Proclamation of Henry III. 1258. In Ellis' Early Engl. Pronunciation, Pt. II, pp. 501, etc.

Adam Davie's Five Dreams. Circa 1307–27. Ed. Furnivall, E.E.T.S., 1878.

London Charters and Documents (1). From 1384-(circa

1450). See account given in Morsbach, Englische Schriftsprache, 1888.

London Charters and Documents (2). From 1430–1500. See account in Lekebusch, Londoner Urkunden-Sprache, 1906.

E. Literary English.

Chaucer's Works.

Gower's Confessio Amantis. Ed. Macaulay, in Complete Works, Oxford; and Selections from C. A., Oxford, 1903.

Sir John Mandeville's Voiage and Travaile. 1356. Ed. Haliwell, 1839. Extracts in Specimens.

Hoccleve. 1400. Minor Poems, ed. F. Furnivall, E.E.T.S., 1892; Regent of Princes, Furnivall, E.E.T.S., 1899. Short Extracts in Skeat's Specimens of Engl. Lit.

Lydgate. Circa 1420. Troy Book, ed. Bergen, E.E.T.S., I and II, 1906; III, 1908; IV, V, 1910; Temple of Glass, ed. J. Schick, E.E.T.S., 1891; London Lyckpenny, and Extracts from Storie of Thebes in Skeat's Specimens.

John Capgrave's Chronicle. Ed. F. C. Hingeston, Rolls Series, 1858.

Caxton, Historyes of Troye. Extracts in Skeat's Specimens.

F. West Midland Texts.

Earliest Complete Engl. Prose Psalter. 1350. Ed. Bülbring, E.E.T.S., 1891.

Catherine Group. (Legends of St. Juliana, ed. Cockayne, E.E.T.S., 1872; St. Margaret, ed. Cockayne, E.E.T.S., 1866; and St. Catherine, ed. E. Einenkel, E.E.T.S., 1884.) First half of thirteenth century.

Alliterative Poems. 1350. Ed. Morris (2nd ed.), 1869.

William of Palerme. 1355–61. Ed. Skeat, E.E.T.S., 1867.

Joseph of Arimathea. 1350. Ed. Skeat, E.E.T.S., 1871.

John Audelay's Poems. 1426. Percy Society, vol. xiv, 1844.

Myrc's Instructions for Parish Priests. Circa 1450. Ed. Peacock, E.E.T.S. (Revised), 1902.

NOTE. The dialect of *Ancren Riwle* in MS. Nero A. xiv, printed by Morton, Camden Soc., 1853, is practically identical with that of the Catherine Group, now widely held to be South W. Midland. A. R. was long considered as Sthrn., chiefly, probably, on account of *u* for O.E. *y* (ŭ–i). This feature is now known to be also West and Central Midland. Cp. § 158 (*c*) below.

G. Southern Texts.

History of Holy Rood Tree. 1170. Ed. Napier, E.E.T.S., 1894.

Lambeth Homilies. Before 1200. Old English Homilies, I. 1–182. Ed. Morris, E.E.T.S., 1868. Extracts in Specimens 1.

Trinity (Cambridge) *Homilies.* Before 1200. O.E. Homs. II. Ed. Morris, E.E.T.S., 1873. Extracts in Specimens 1.

Moral Ode or *Poema Morale.* Before 1200 (Trinity MS.); 1250 (Jesus MS.). Both these in O.E. Misc. and Specimens. The Egerton MS., c. 1200, printed in MacLean, and O.E. Homs. I. Critical Text by Lewin, Halle, 1881.

Wooing of our Lord. 1210. O.E. Homs. I. Extracts in Specimens.

God Ureisun. 1210. O.E. Homs. I. Extracts in Specimens.

Soules Ward. 1210. O.E. Homs. I.

Owl and Nightingale. 1246–50. O.E. Misc. Extracts in Specimens.

Proverbs of Alfred. 1250. O.E. Misc., 102–38. Extracts in Specimens.

Robert of Gloucester. (Metrical Chronicle.) 1298. Ed. Wright, Rolls Series, 1887. 2 Vols. Extracts in Specimens.

St. Juliana. (Metrical.) 1300. Ed. Cockayne, E.E.T.S. 51, 1872.

Trevisa. (Translation of *Higden's Polychronicon.*) 1387. Ed. Babington (vols. i and ii), and Lumby (vols. iii–ix), Rolls Series, 1865–86. Extracts in Specimens.

St. Editha. 1420. Wiltshire Dialect. Ed. Horstmann, Heilbronn, 1883.

H. Kentish Texts.

Kentish Gospels. 1150. In Skeat's Gospels in Anglo-Saxon.

Kentish Homilies. 1150. (MS. Vespasian A. 22.) O.E. Homs. I. 217–43. Extracts in Specimens.

Kentish Sermons. Before 1250. (MS. Laud 471.) O.E. Misc. 20–36.

William of Shoreham's Poems. 1307. Ed. Conrath, E.E.T.S., 1902. Extracts in Specimens.

Ayenbite of Inwyt. 1340. Ed. Morris, E.E.T.S., 1866. Extracts in Specimens.

§ 155. The Treatment of O.E. Sounds in M.E.

The changes which befell the old vowel sounds in M.E. fall under the two main heads—*Quantitative*, and *Qualitative*. The former class of changes involves the lengthening of original short vowels, and the shortening of vowels originally long, under conditions which it will be our business to describe. The latter category of changes involves an alteration of the actual nature and quality of the vowel sound without any change of quantity.

The *Quantitative* changes are far more numerous than the *Qualitative*, and their results for the subsequent history of English are far-reaching.

Our ideas concerning the nature and quality of M.E. sounds are based (1) upon the spelling in the various texts; (2) upon comparison (*a*) with O.E., (*b*) with Mod. Engl., (*c*) with other forms of Germanic speech; (3) upon the character of Rhymes in M.E.; (4) upon the contemporary descriptions of the pronunciation of English in the sixteenth century, when many M.E. sounds still remained unaltered. The spelling adopted by Orm throws great light on M.E. quantity. Orm systematically writes a consonant single after a long vowel, and doubles it after a short—*child*, *chilldre*, etc. He also sometimes marks short vowels—*gŏd*, etc.

§ 156. Qualitative Vowel Changes in M.E. Simple Vowels.

(1) The Rounding of O.E. ā to ō.

This change is shown by the spellings *o* and occasionally *oa*, later on, to have taken place in some dialects at least as early as the middle of the twelfth century, since there are two examples of *ō* spellings already in the Peterborough Chronicle. The rounding of *ā* ultimately involved all the dialects of the *South and Midlands*, but it is pretty certain that it did not begin everywhere at the same time.

Since the Norman-French loan-words in M.E. retain their long *ā* unchanged, e.g. *dāme*, *fāme*, *grāve*, it is clear that the O.E. *ā* in *hām*, *stān*, *hlāf* 'loaf', etc., etc., must have undergone some slight rounding before these foreign words got into the language; otherwise, had the process begun later, it must have involved them as well.

The Peterborough Chronicle (Midland 1154) has the form *mōre*; the Kt. Homilies (Vesp. A. 22) before 1150 have a few *ō* forms, *ōze*, and *ōzen*, but *a* enormously preponderates. The Holy Rood Tree (1170), Trinity Homilies (before 1200),

Lambeth Homilies (before 1200), Prose Life of St. Juliana (1210), Wooing of our Lord (1210), all Southern texts, have no *o*-spellings. Other Southern texts of about the same date have *o*, either occasionally or exclusively. Poema Morale (Egerton MS. before 1200)—*ōre* 'grace', O.E. *ār*; *lōre*, *mōre*, *wōt* 'knows', O.E. *wāt*, etc., but also many *ā*-spellings—*are*, *māre*, *wāt*, etc.; Gōd Ureisun of ure lauerd (1210)—*hōlie*, *ōne*; Ancren Riwle (1225), Metrical Life of St. Juliana (1300) have *ō* throughout.

Of the other earliest Midland texts, the East Midland Ormulum (1200) has *a* throughout, while the W. Midland Laȝamon has even in the early MS. (1200) occasional *o*, while the later (1250) has generally *o*; Genesis and Exodus and Bestiary (E. Midl. 1250) both have regularly *o*.

These statistics show that the change must have begun at least well before the middle of the twelfth century, though its results were not consistently nor universally expressed by the spelling before the first quarter of the thirteenth century. The two forms in the Chronicle can hardly be accidental, but it is rather remarkable that the later E. Midl. Ormulum, so careful in its spelling, should give no indications of it. The Southern texts mentioned, except the Vespasian Homilies, which are Kentish, are all from the South-West, and they appear to be slightly behind the former in writing *o*. It may perhaps be argued that the rounding began slightly earlier in the Sth.-East than elsewhere.

Under the rounding of O.E. *ā* we must include that of *ā* in the Anglian combination *-āld*, in *āld*, *cāld*, *hāldan*, *bāld*. The forms *ōld*, *cōld*, *hōlden*, *bōld*, appear in Midland and even in some Sthn. texts in the middle of the twelfth century. They soon oust the typical native forms in the Sth.-Western dialects and even gain a footing in Kentish. (See §§ 165–6.)

157. (2) O.E. ā in the Northern Dialects.

In the Northern Dialects of England, and in Scotch English, no rounding takes place. Many texts preserve the symbol *a* unaltered in the M.E. period—*ham*, *stan*, etc.; others, especially in the fourteenth century, write *ai* in words of this class. As regards the sound, this must have been advanced, and fronted to [ā̈] pretty early, and this was subsequently raised to [ē] and [e]. Modern North English and Scotch dialects have [e] or [ī] as a representative of O.E. *ā*.

It is impossible to say with anything like certainty when the fronting process began. For one thing our Northern texts only begin with the end of the thirteenth century or

the beginning of the fourteenth. The rhymes of the fourteenth-century Scotch texts, however, make it certain that by that period the fronting was complete, and probable that the vowel had already been raised to a mid-front. It further is apparent from the earliest M.E. Northern texts that O.E. *ā* and Norman-French *ā*, and O.E. *ă* in open syllables were levelled under the same sound. The Scotch texts from Barbour onwards constantly write *ai, ay*, e.g. *fayis* 'foes', *tais* 'toes', *raid*, O.E. *rād* 'rode'.

(*a*) Rhymes of O.E. *ā* with O.E. lengthened *ă*: **Metr. Ps.**, 1300: *mare—ouerfare*; **Sunday Homilies in Verse**, 1300: *schāthe—lāthe*; **Hampole**, 1340: *wāte* (pl. vb.)—*late*; *bāre* (adj.) —*sāre*; **Barbour's Bruce** (1375): *hāle* 'whole' rhymes with *douglasdale*, *braid* 'broad' rhymes with *maid* 'made'.

(*b*) Rhymes of O.E. *ā* with Fr. *ā*: **Bruce** rhymes *blāme* with *schame* (O.E. *ă*-) and the latter with *hame* 'home'.

(*c*) Rhymes which show the fronting of O.E. *ā*: **Hampole**: *māre—ware*, O.E. *wēre* 'were' subj.; **Bruce**: *gais* 'goes'—*wes* 'was'; *mair*, O.E. *mār—thair*, O.E. *þēr*.

§ 158. (3) **The Treatment of O.E. ў̆ (i-Mutation of ŭ, §§ 108–9).**

(*a*) In the North, including Yorks., and in the East Midlands, including Lincoln, Hunts., Norf., and part of Suff., O.E. *ў̆* is unrounded, probably in the late O.E. period. M.E. texts from these areas write *i*, or *y*, for the original [ў̆] sound, e.g. Orm, and Gen. and Ex.

(*b*) In the O.E. period, O.E. *ў̆* had become *ĕ* in Kent. (cf. § 142). In Kentish texts of the M.E. period these sounds continue, and are written in the old way. The evidence of Pl. Ns., however, of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, shows that by this time the *e*-forms had spread from Kent and are found also in varying degrees of frequency in Sussex, Essex, and Suffolk, and to some slight extent in Cambridgeshire also.

(*c*) In by far the greater part of England, that is to say in the whole of the West Midlands, and Central Midlands, south of Yorkshire, and in all the Southern Counties apart from those mentioned under (*b*) above, and with the qualification stated below, O.E. *ў̆* remains with, approximately, its original sound, at any rate well into the fifteenth century. From a very early period, at least as early as 1170 or so, the French spelling *u* is written for the old sound, and later this with occasional *o* becomes the exclusive mode of representing it when short. When long it is frequently written *ui, uy*.

(*d*) From the forms of Pl. Ns. containing such elements as O.E. *hyll*, *byriġ*, *pytt*, *lȳtel*, etc., etc., it would seem that there was also an area in the extreme South-West, starting probably in Devon, where isolative unrounding of O.E. *y̆* took place in the M.E. period, if not before.

(*e*) The **London Dialect** seems, originally, to have preserved the *y̆*-sound, but by the fourteenth century the *i*-forms predominate, as they do in Standard English to-day. Alongside of the *i*- and *u*-forms, others with *ĕ* are found in the London Dialect, whither they penetrated from Kt. and Essex (cp. Dölle, pp. 26; 27). The *i*-forms are hard to account for, since there is no *i*-area in immediate contact with London or with Middlesex. They were probably introduced by traders from some *i*-area, perhaps by merchants from Norwich.

(*f*) The process of unrounding *y̆* before front consonants (*ċ*, *ċg*, *sċ*), which took place in O.E. (cp. § 122 above), can be clearly traced in M.E., especially in Pl. N. forms. From these sources it is possible to localize the process more definitely than was possible in O.E. texts. The words *myċel*, *bryċġ*, *rysċ*, etc., appear as *michel*, *brigge*, *rissche*, etc., with the greatest frequency, especially in the *u*-areas of the S.-West, Devonshire, Dorset, Wilts.; with less frequency in Hants, and hardly at all in Glos. and Surrey. In the latter areas, *muchel*, *brugge*, etc., are the prevailing forms, and this is true also of the *u*-areas in the Midlands.

NOTE 1. The above statement differs in nearly all respects from the hitherto received views as to the distribution of *u*- and *i*-forms in M.E., and also as regards the extension of *e*-forms. Cp., however, on these points *E. St.*, vol. 47, pp. 1, etc., and 145, etc. (This re-statement is now endorsed by Luick, *Hist. Gr.*, § 183, Anm. 2. 287.)

NOTE 2. The view of Kluge (Paul's *Grundr.* i², p. 1046) that at a certain period, in an area not clearly defined, O.E. *y̆* was retracted before front cons. [tʃ, dž, ʃ] to the corresponding back vowel, should be mentioned. In this way Kluge explains the mod. forms *cudgel*, *rush*, etc., which, according to hitherto received views, should be **kidgel*, **rish*, etc. He calls the process '*Rückumlaut*'.

§ 159. (4) Treatment of O.E. æ̆.

In O.E., it will be remembered that *æ* remains in spelling, and perhaps to a great extent also in pronunciation, in W.S. and Northumbrian consistently, also in part of the Mercian area, while it is raised to *ĕ* already in Early Kentish, and in the Mercian dialect represented by the Vesp. Ps. (cp. § 137). The Early Transition texts of the Sth.-West, on the whole, preserve a front vowel, variously written *e*, *æ*, and (occasionally) *ea*. [Cp. §§ 97, Note, and 120, Note, concerning probable

raising of *æ* in L. W.S.] The Midland texts of the same date invariably have *a*, showing that *æ* was retracted to a back vowel. The E. Midl. Peterb. Chron. writes *æ*, but is still much influenced by the earlier spelling; Orm, however, and the E. Midl. Bestiary, and Gen. and Ex. have *a* throughout. The early thirteenth-century Wooing of our Lord (Sthn.) has *a* throughout, and this feature has presumably come in from the Midl. type. After the beginning of the fourteenth century, pure Sthn. texts have *a*, which can hardly be a true phonetic development from *e*, but must indicate that the Midland type has spread over the Sthn. area as well, to the extinction of the true Sthn. type. A few statistics of the spellings of the Sthn. texts are desirable. H. Rd. Tree (circa 1170) generally writes *æ*, occasionally *e*, and once *ea*: *bead*, O.E. *bæd*, and, after *w*, *a*: *water*; Lambeth Homilies (circa 1190), *e*: *efter*, *wes*, *feder*, *cweð*, O.E. *æfter*, *wæs*, *fæder*, *cwæð*, etc.; God Ureisun (1210), *e*: *gled*, *efter*, etc.; Poema Morale (Egerton MS. circa 1200), *e*: *wetere*, *hedde*, O.E. *hæfde*, *hwet*, also *æfter*; Ancren Riwle (1225), generally *e*: *efter*, *feder* 'father', *et* 'at', *þet*, *epple* 'apple', etc., but also *blăc*, *bac*, *hwat*, etc. The Metrical Version of the Life of St. Juliana (1300) has *a* throughout: *wat*, *quaþ*, *ȝaf*, *was*, *glade*, etc.; Trevisa (1387) almost always writes *a*: *þat*, *blak*, *gladlych*, *schal*, etc., but *creftes*; St. Editha (1400) has always *a*.

The Catherine Group, S.W. Midl., have *e* frequently.

The earliest London Charters and Proclamations preserve *æ* which is so written. Davie, however (early fourteenth century) has *ă*.]

§ **160.** We may sum up the history of O.E. *æ* in M.E. as follows. It was retracted to *ă* in the Midlands and North quite early, perhaps in Late O.E. itself. In the Sthn. dialects, other than Kentish, where the raising took place in the ninth century, *æ* was raised to *ĕ* (mid-front-slack) in Early Transition English, or before, and remained, in this speech-area, until it gave place to the Midland *ă* late in the thirteenth century.

In Kentish the O.E. *ĕ*-type survives longer, though even here we find a few *ă*-forms in the middle of the twelfth century: thus *fader*, *hwat*, *þat*, alongside of more frequent *ĕ*-forms: *þet*, *wes*, *efter*, etc., in Kt. Hom., Vesp. A. 22 (1150). The Laud. Sermons (before 1250) have more *ă*- than *ĕ*-forms, but still retain *þet*, *efter*, *wet*, etc.; in Ayenbite (1340) the *e*-forms are more frequent: *eppel*, *gled*, *gles*, *ssel* 'shall', *weter*, etc., but occasional *ă* in *smak*, *uader*. W. of Shoreham (1307) seems to have only *e*.

The Midland and Northern *ă*-type becomes the predominant, and finally the sole type, in the Standard Dialect, and apparently throughout the whole country, as is shown by the testimony of the Modern Dialects.

§ 161. (5) O.E. ǣ in M.E.

It will be convenient to distinguish the two origins of this sound as $\bar{æ}^1$ and $\bar{æ}^2$. The former represents Prim. O.E. $\bar{æ}$, W. Gmc. *ā*, as in W.S. *dǣd* 'dead', *sǣd* 'seed', *sp(r)ǣċe*, etc., the latter, the result of the *i*-mutation of O.E. *ā*, W.Gmc. *ai*, as in *dǣl* 'part', *hǣlu* 'health', etc., *tǣċċan* 'teach', etc. It will be remembered that in all the non-W.Sax. dialects $æ^1$ was raised to $ē$ early in the O.E. period (§ 123), while $\bar{æ}^2$ remained everywhere, except in Kentish (§ 140). W.S. therefore had $\bar{æ}$ in words of both classes, Kentish had $ē$ in both, the Anglian dialects had $ē$ for $\bar{æ}^1$, and retained $\bar{æ}^2$.

It seems probable that in Late O.E. or Early Transition, O.E. $\bar{æ}$ wherever it existed, and no matter what its origin, was raised to [ɛ̄] mid-front-slack. Since Kt. had not this sound (O.E. $\bar{æ}$) at all, we may dismiss this dialect at once.

Midland and Northern dialects distinguish $æ^1$ = [ē] tense, from $\bar{æ}^2$ = [ɛ̄] slack during the whole M.E. period, as is shown by the rhymes in careful poets, and by the descriptions of the two sounds by sixteenth-century writers on pronunciation.

The dialects of the W.Sax. area, and some dialects north of the Thames, preserve the equivalent of $\bar{æ}^1$ and $\bar{æ}^2$ as [ɛ̄], and careful scribes often distinguish this sound in the spelling from the tense *ē* in *dēman*, *grēne*, etc., from O.E. *ē* (*i*-mutation of *ō*). The least satisfactory spelling is *e*, *ee*, the most unambiguous are *æ*, *ea*. *æ* is found comparatively rarely after the thirteenth century, and probably not at all after the beginning of the fourteenth.

It should be noted that Orm's spellings with *æ* for $\bar{æ}^1$ are remarkable, for though he occasionally writes *e*, the former is his favourite symbol. It is hardly conceivable that an E. Midl. dialect can really have pronounced the slack sound here, and the occurrence of the *æ*-spellings must probably be attributed to the domination and persistence of the classical W.Sax. mode of writing among learned persons like Orm. It is difficult otherwise to account for his forms *spæche*, *spæken* (pret. pl.), *ærest*, *forȝæfe*. *ēvenn*, O.E. *ǣfen*, l. 1105, is normal to his dialect as we should suppose.

Examples of O.E. $\bar{æ}$ in Southern texts are: (1) $\bar{æ}^1$: Rd. Tree—*spǣċe* and *spēċe*, *nēfre* (*æ* predominates for both $\bar{æ}$-sounds in this text, with some *e*-spellings, and a few *ea*); P. M., *e*

chiefly—*wēre, drēden*; Gōd Ur.—*misdēden, grēden*; Lambeth Hom.—*nēddren, wēren*; A. R.—*weaden*, O.E. *ġewǣde*; *read*, O.E. *rǣd*; *meal*, O.E. *mǣl* 'time'; *heren* 'hairs'; Metr. St. Jul.—*strēte, brēþ, sprēde*; Trevisa—*weete* (sb.) 'wet'.

(2) $\bar{æ}^2$: Rd. Tree—*dēl, deales, aleaden* (*æ* predominates); P. M.—*sælþe, sēlþe, unhēlþe, þǣre, ǣuerich, læden* (vb.); Gōd Ur.—*cleane, todealen, heale, leafdi*, but *tēchen*; Lambeth Hom. —*sea* 'the sea', *clēnesse*; A. R.—*leafdi, dealen*, and *delen* 'parts', *geat* 'goats', *learеð* 'teaches', *heale, arearen*; Metr. St. Jul.—*sē* 'sea', *brēde, lēuedi*.

It appears from these statistics that *ea* is written with far greater consistency for $\bar{æ}^2$ than for $\bar{æ}^1$, but the identity of the sounds is proved by the fact that *e, ea, æ* are written indifferently for both, and further from such rhymes as *þǣre—wēre, drēden —læden* (P. M., Egerton MS.), *brēde—sprēde—dēde* 'dead' (St. Jul.). The Kentish type with [ē] in this class of words certainly survived in M.E. The Kentishman Gower writes *cliene, diel*, O.E. (Kt.) *clēne, dēl*. G. habitually writes *ie* for the tense vowel.

§ **162.** The precise geographical extent of the $\bar{æ}^1$-area is very difficult to establish. Was it co-extensive with the W. Sax. sphere of speech influence, and if so, how far did this extend? Some authorities believe that the $\bar{æ}$-area was considerable in extent. See the important article by Pogatscher in *Anglia*, xxiii, and 'Mittelenglische Mundarten' by Jordan, *G.R.M.*, ii, p. 124, etc.

The London dialect was originally within the area. The earliest London Charters and Davie have [ɛ̄], and even in Chaucer, who often uses the Anglian *ē*-forms, as is shown by his rhymes, the W.S. [ɛ̄]-type still predominates in the poetry. It is practically impossible to trace the survival of the W.S. $\bar{æ}$-type beyond the fourteenth century. It was apparently ousted by the increasing predominance of the non-W. Sax. form. The most certain test of a M.E. slack [ɛ̄] in a word containing originally O.E. $\bar{æ}^1$, is the survival of the sound as a mid-front in Early Mod. Engl. In the fifteenth or early sixteenth century all M.E. tense *ē*-sounds were raised to [ē]; cp. § 229 below.

NOTE. Pogatscher, in the article mentioned, on the evidence of the forms Pl. Names beginning with *strat-* (O.E. *strǣt-*, shortened to *strǽt-*, and retracted to *strǻt-*) tries to show that the *æ*-area included the following counties: Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset, Wilts., Hants, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, southern part of Northants which borders on Bucks., Bucks. itself, Bedfordshire, Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk. In Essex and Warwickshire both *stret-* (= O.E. *strēt-*, non-W. Sax.) and *strat-* occur.

The rest of England belonged to the *ē*-area. These results are, however, somewhat dubious, as Pogatscher relies only upon the Modern forms of the names. Cp. the criticism by O. Ritter in *Anglia*, N. F. xxv, p. 269, etc.

§ 163. (6) Treatment of O.E. ō in M.E.

O.E. *ō* was a mid-back-tense vowel, and in the South and Midlands, and in Kent was preserved as such in Early Transition and Middle English. During the M.E. period, this sound, and both in English and Norse words as well as in those of French origin, gradually underwent a process of *over-rounding* (see § 47 above) and was subsequently raised to a high-back-tense [ū], to which stage it had reached in Late Middle English; cp. Note below. There is nothing, however, in normal M.E. spelling to indicate that this process was going on, but it is clear from the rhymes that original *ō* was quite distinct in sound from the other *ō* which developed during the M.E. period and was a long slack vowel. See §§ 156, 173 (*c*) below.

In the North of England, on the other hand, and in Scotland, original long *ō* underwent an entirely different development, evidence of which is afforded by the spelling, by rhymes, and by the pronunciation in the Mod. dialects of these areas. In Scotland, at any rate, it was gradually advanced to a sound which, in the fourteenth century, was identified with Fr. *u*=[ȳ]. Cursor Mundi (1320) and Nthn. Homilies (1330) still appear to write only *o*—*tōk*, *bōk*, *gōd*, *mōd*, *dō*, etc.; Hampole (1340) writes *o*, but also *u*—*bukes*, *gudes*. It should be remembered that *u* at this period generally stands for [y̆], [ū] being usually written *ou*—*hous*, etc. The approximation of O.E. *ō* to [ȳ] in sound is made certain by the fact that it rhymes with this; thus Hampole has *sone* rhyming to *fortōne*. The symbol *o* is used indifferently with *u* for the French sound. Minot (1352) has *suth*, O.E. *sōþ* 'true', *flude*, *gude*, but also *loke*, *stode*, etc. Barbour's Bruce (1375), written in Scotland in a language still undistinguishable from that of Nth. Engl., writes *o* and *u*, also *oy*—*soyne* 'soon', *doyne* 'done', and rhymes O.E. *ō* and Fr. *ū* [ȳ]: *aventure*—*forfure*, O.E. *-fōr* 'departed'. The later Sc. Schir W. Wallace rhymes *blud*—*rude*, *fude*, *blude*, *gud* all with *conclud*, and so on.

Gavin Douglas (c. 1525) commonly writes *ui* as *buik*, *fluid*, etc., and this remained as the conventional Scots spelling for this sound.

NOTE. As regards the South and Midland English change of *ō* to [ū], this will be dealt with later (cp. §§ 236, 237 below) under Mod. Engl. sound changes, but although the early sixteenth century is usually held to be

the period at which the [ū] sound had fully developed, occasional spellings like *Bouclond* (O.E. *bōc-*), *Lollebrouk* (O.E. *brōc*), *Curypoule* (O.E. *pōl* 'pool'), *Caresbrouk*, *Cokepoule*, which occur in Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, and Hampshire documents (*Feudal Aids*, vol. ii) of the fourteenth century, and the form *gowde* 'good', St. Editha, line 1472 (Wilts., c. 1420), rather point to the fact that in the South-West, at any rate, the [ū] sound may have developed earlier than elsewhere, and earlier than is generally supposed. *ou*, *ow* are the regular M.E. ways of expressing [ū]. See § 152 above.

§ 164. Disappearance of the O.E. Diphthongs in M.E.

O.E. *ĕ̄a̅*. We have already seen (§ 97. 3, Note) that in Late O.E. there are many examples of *æ*-spellings for *ēa̅*. Although *ea* is often written in M.E. in words where it would normally occur in O.E., there is no doubt that it represents the sound [ĕ̄] and not a diphthong. From the moment that the old *ĕ̄a̅* was simplified to [æ̆̄], later [ĕ̄], it was natural that *ea* should be used to represent these sounds, since the symbol *æ* gradually fell into disuetude, and *e* was ambiguous. The commonest source of *ĕa̅* in L. O.E. was Fracture (§ 102). In W.S. the *ĕa̅* which resulted from *æ* preceded by a front consonant was monophthongized in L. O.E. itself, and became *e*—*ċef*, etc. That from Fracture was also simplified, as is shown by Ælfric's *swælt*, *swært*, etc. (§ 102, Note 1).

Before the *l*-combinations Anglian had no fracture—*cāld*, etc., and in W.S. *eall*, *ċeald*, *healf*, etc., must have become *æll*, *ċǣld*, *hælf* in the late period. This form, or the development of it with [ɛ], is found in the South, generally written *ea*, sometimes *æ*, and *e*, in Early Transition: e. g. *heald*, *anwealde*, but *hældan* in H. Rd. Tree; *wealdes*, in Wohunge; *eald*, *fealde*, *healden*, *wealden*, but *wælde* in Poema Morale. We may assume that *ea* here represents the mid-front-slack vowel, and that, before *-ld*, this was lengthened to [ɛ̄] (§ 114 above).

§ 165. Ousting of W.S. type before -ll, -ld, etc.

It is remarkable that the W.S. *ē*-type was, quite early, completely ousted by the Anglian type—*all*, *āld*, instead of *eall* or *æll* = [ɛll, ɛ̄ld], etc. We find this beginning in the late twelfth century in H. Rd. Tree, which Napier says has *all* fifty times; Wohunge has such forms as *halde*, *balde*, *caldliche*; Soules Warde has *halden*; A. R. has *āld*, *tālde*, *ihālden*, *cāld*; Prov. of Alfr. (Jesus MS., 1246–50) has also the Anglian *cāld*, *hālde*, *alre*, but preserves the Sax. type in the solitary forms *wēlde* 'wield', *wēldest*.

Thus the native Southern type is early—one might almost say, suddenly—superseded and ousted by alien forms, in the Saxon area, both in words with lengthening such as *cāld*,

instead of the normal descendant *chē(a)ld*, of W.S. *ċeald*, L. W.S. *ċǣld*, and in words without lengthening such as *all*, *half*, etc.

Such forms as *hōlde*, *ōld*, *cōld* from Anglian *hāldan*, *āld*, etc. fall of course under the ordinary rounding of O.E. *ā*, § 156.

§ 166. O.E. ċeald, half, etc., in Kentish.

It seems probable that in Kt. the O.E. diphthongs survived in some forms as diphthongs into the M.E. period, O.E. *ea* probably becoming a 'rising diphthong' and passing through [*eá*, *iá*] to [já] or [jǽ, jé]. The Ayenbite (1340) exhibits the characteristic Kt. state of affairs more consistently, in the spelling, than the earlier texts in the same dialect. Thus Ayenbite writes *yalde*, *ealde* 'old'; *ofhyealde*, *yhyealde* p. p. O.E. *ġe-healden*; *by-wealde*, *chealde*, *chald*, and *bēld*, O.E. *beald*. These attempts probably indicate such a pronunciation as [tʃǽld, tʃēld, ihjǽlde, ihjēlde] or something of the kind. We should probably not regard such spellings as *hald* 'holds', *chald* 'cold', in this text as Anglian forms, since these would have *ō*, but as attempts to express [jǽ] or [jē]. No doubt after *ch* [tʃ] the [j]-sound was lost. Of earlier Kt. texts, the Vespas. Homilies write *manifeald*, but also *manifald*, *un-itald*; the Laud. Homilies have the Kt. spelling *ihialde*, the ambiguous *chald*, the apparently Saxon *elde* 'age', the Anglian *i-told*, and the hybrid *chōld*. All Kt. texts in M.E. have such forms as *alle*, *falle*, *half*, which we must regard as Anglian importations, which here, as in the Sth.-West, have ousted the native forms.

The earliest London Charters, etc., have *eallra*, *forstealles*, etc., *gehealde*, *bihalde*, etc.; but fourteenth-century Davie has *bifalle* (Dölle, p. 53). Chaucer still preserves a few cases of the Sthn. or Kt. type—*hēlde*, *bihēlde* (inf.), *hēlde* (Pres. Pl.), *wēlde* (inf.). These examples occur in rhymes. (Frieshammer, p. 34.)

NOTE. In Mod. English, *weald* n. and *wield* vb. seem to be the sole survivors of the old *ea*, M.E. *æ*, [ē]-type, and even here the noun has the alternative Anglian form *wold*.

§ 167. O.E. ĕa followed by r + consonant.

O.E. *hearm*, *eart*, *earm* 'arm' (L. O.E. *hærm*, etc.) are written *herm*, *ert*, *erm* in thirteenth-century texts in the South-West. The combination *-er-* seems generally to become *-ar-* later. In the Midlands and Nth., *harm*, *art*, etc., are the prevailing types already in Early Transition (in Midl.), and appear to go back to an O.E. type without Fracture.

§ 168. O.E. ĕ̄o̅.

Most of the twelfth and thirteenth-century texts in dialects of the South and Midlands still write *eo*, though not with perfect consistency, in words where this diphthong, whether long or short, is found in O.E. Thus we find *eorþe*, *leove*, etc. In many cases this spelling may have been purely traditional, and have implied no diphthongal sound, but rather that of *ĕ̄*; in other cases (see below, § 169) it probably stood for the sound [ø]; lastly, in Kentish texts, when *eo* is found along with *ie*, *ye*, etc., a diphthong may have been preserved, though it had probably become a rising diphthong = [jé], etc.

The earliest London Charters, etc., write *eorl*, *weorþ*, *þēof*, *bēo̅*, etc., etc., but in the fourteenth century this dialect writes *ĕ̄*:—thus Davie has *swerd*, *herte*, *fer*, etc., *bēn*, *lēue* (O.E. *lēof*), and Chaucer has *self*, *herte*, *erthe*; *bēēn*, *thēēf*, *lēēf*, etc., etc. These are the ancestors of the Mod. Standard forms.

The late Kentish Ayenbite (1340) still writes *ye*, *ie* fairly consistently for O.E. *ēo̅*:—*pyēf*, *dyēuel*, *byēþ*, *dyēp*, etc., O.E. *þēof*, *dēofol*, *bēoþ*, *dēop*, but *e* is more common for O.E. *ĕo̅*: *erþe*, *heuene*, *herte*, etc.; *yerþe* 'earth' is found. In earlier texts, e.g. Vesp. A. 22 (1150), and Kt. Sermons (Laud MS.), before 1200, *eo*, and *e* are both written for the short *ĕo̅*, while the former writes *bien*, *þiode*, *chiesen* (O.E. *ċēosan*), etc., regularly. This looks as though the long diphthong was preserved later than the short, though there are indications in the early Mod. period that the Kt. *yerth* persisted (cp. § 228).

§ 169. O.E. ĕ̄o̅ becomes M.E. [ø].

Many dialects, especially from the South-West, but perhaps also the London Dialect and West Midlands, appear to have made the long and short O.E. *eo* into a front rounded vowel, still written in the thirteenth century, but later often written *u* (= [y]) in W. Midl. documents. The precise area in which this sound [ø] existed is not yet fully established. In some areas it seems to have represented not only the old diphthongs, but also the O.E. sound [ø] (cp. § 105) from *ō*–*ī*.

In most areas this [ø], no matter what its origin, was unrounded to *ĕ̄* in the thirteenth century, so that it has no significance for the subsequent history of English. In the Nth., the East Midl., and the Sth.-East, O.E. *ĕ̄o̅* seems to have been smoothed to *ĕ̄* in the earliest M.E. period without passing through the [ø]-stage.

In W. Midl. we often find *urþe*, O.E. *eorþe*; *burn*, O.E. *beorn* 'man'; *lūd*, O.E. *lēod*, etc.

The French *peuple* appears as *people*, *puple*, *peple*. The

Mod. spelling probably represents the M.E. spelling of the front-round vowel. Cp. also § 192 on [ø] in French words.

NOTE. The possibility of the existence of an [ø]-stage in some areas, and of the so-called 'diphthongs' in Kt., hardly affects the history of Standard English; these are largely curiosities which interest chiefly the special student of M.E. For further information see Bülbring's articles, cited above in Bibliography, C. iv.

§ 170. O.E. ĭē (y̆) in M.E.

Since *ĭē* is purely W. Sax. its representative is only found in the Saxon area in M.E. Already in O.E. in one part of the area *ĭē* was apparently levelled under *ĭ*, which sound survives unaltered in M.E. In another part this diphthong whether long or short became *y̆* in L. W.S. (cp. § 119 above). This is preserved in M.E., but always written *u*, or (when long) also *ui, uy—hurde* 'shepherd', *huiren* 'hear', etc.

Unlike the other O.E. *y̆* (from *ŭ–i*, cp. § 108) which was universal in O.E., and which survived widely in M.E. (§ 158), the sound we are considering is confined to part of the South.

The original Southern character of the London Dialect is shown by the occurrence of *ĭ, y̆* in the earliest Charters and Procl.; after the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, non-Saxon *ē*-forms are alone found—*yrfnume, alȳsednesse*, etc., but Davie—*hēre* 'hear', *stēl* 'steel'.

§ 171. Development of New Diphthongs in M.E.

Numerous diphthongs arose in M.E. through the development of glide-sounds between vowels and the following [j], [w̆], [h] and [ɣ]. The glide took the form, in the former cases, of the vowel *i*, in the latter, of *u*. The diphthongs are written *ai, ay, ei, ey, au, aw, ou, ow*, etc.

(1) M.E. *ai*—O.E. *æġ* becomes M.E. *æi, ai*; O.E. *dæġ*, M.E. *dæi, dai*.

(2) M.E. *ei*—(*a*) O.E. *eġ* becomes M.E. *ei*; O.E. *weġ*, M.E. *wei*; O.E. *leġde*, ME. *leide*.

(*b*) Late O.E. *æ̆h* from *ĕah* becomes M.E. *ei*: *æhta* 'eight', M.E. *ehte, eilite*, etc.

(3) M.E. *ēi*—(*a*) O.E. *ǣġ* becomes M.E. *ēi*: O.E. *ǣġ* 'egg', M.E. *ēi*.

(*b*) Late O.E. *ǣ* from *ēā*+*g*, which is subsequently fronted, becomes M.E. *ēi*: O.E. *ēāge*, later *ǣge* 'eye', M.E. *ēyē*. This is subsequently raised in Lit. M.E. to *īye*, the origin of Mod. [ai] *eye*, though the spelling represents another type. Chaucer has both *ȳe* and *ēȳe*; O.E. *hēāh, hǣli, hēli*, M.E. *hēih, hī(li)e*.

(4) M.E. *eu*—O.E. and M.E. *ef-* + consonant becomes *ew* in Late M.E.: O.E. *efete, ev(e)te, ewte* 'newt'.

(5) M.E. *ēu*—O.E. *ēaw*, *ǣw* become M.E. *ēu*: O.E. *dēaw* 'dew', M.E. *dēu*; O.E. *sċēawian*, M.E. *schēwen* 'show'.

(6) M.E. *ēu*—O.E. *ēow* becomes M.E. *ēu*: O.E. *trēowe*, M.E. *trēue* 'true'; O.E. *blēow* 'blew', M.E. *blēu*.

(7) M.E. *au* has several origins—(*a*) O.E. *ag-* followed by a back vowel: O.E. *sagu*, M.E. *sawe*; O.E. *slagen*, M.E. *slāwen*.

(*b*) *af-* followed by a vowel becomes *av*, *aw*, *au*: O.E. *hafoc* 'hawk', M.E. *havek*, *hāwek*, *hauk*.

(*c*) O.Fr. *au*: *faute* 'fault'.

(*d*) O.Fr. nasalized *ā* followed by *n*: M.E. *daunten* 'daunt'.

(8) M.E. *ǭu*—O.E. *āw* becomes M.E. *ōu*, *ōw*: O.E. *cnāwan*, M.E. *knōwen*.

O.E. *āg-* becomes *ōw* between vowels: O.E. *āgan*, M.E. *ōwen*.

O.E. *ŏ* in an open syllable followed by *g* in the next is lengthened; *g* becomes *w* and O.E. *bŏga* 'bow', M.E. *bǭue*, *bōwe*.

NOTE. It is rather doubtful whether *ōu*, *ōw* in these words is really to be regarded as a diphthong at all. The subsequent history of the sound is that of ordinary M.E. *ō* [ɔ̄]. See §§ 156 above, and 173 (*c*) below.

(9) M.E. *ōu*. O.E. *ōg*, *ōh*, M.E. *ōȝ*, *ōh*, seem first of all to have been diphthongized to *ōuw*, *ōuwh*, and then the *ō* assimilates to the second element of the diphthong which disappears so that *ūw*, *ūh* result: O.E. *plōh*, M.E. *plōuh*, *plūh*; O.E. *ġenōh*, M.E. *inōuh*, *inūh*. The inflected cases of these words have in O.E. (gen.) *plōges*, M.E. *plōūwes*, *plūwes*; *ġenōges*, M.E. *inōūwes*, *inūwes*, etc.

NOTE. The combinations [*aʃ*, *antʃ*, *andž*] in some dialects (Sth.-Western ?) often become diphthongal in M.E. *aisschen* 'ask', *chaynge*.

The O.E. combination *-enċt* becomes *-eint*, chiefly in S.W.: O.E. *drenċte*, M.E. *dreinte*; O.E. *blenċte*, M.E. *bleinte*, etc.

§ 172. Monophthongizing of M.E. Diphthongs in -u.

(*a*) Diphthongs whose second element is *-u* lose this element in M.E. and lengthen the first element before lip-consonants: *chāmber* from *chaumber*; *save*, *sāfe* from *sauve*, *saufe*; M.E. *rēme* (Trevisa) by side of *rewme* 'kingdom'; Mod. Engl. *jeopardy* [džɛpədi], in spite of its spelling, implies M.E. *jēpardi*. *people*, *feoff* [pīpl, fīf] are also probably examples of this influence of the lip-consonant. The name *Beaumont*, now usually [boumənt], owes its pronunciation to French influence, but the variant *Beamont* [bīmənt] is a case in point (cp. Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, pp. 485, 499, 500, 503). Luick rightly

conjectures the existence of [bīmənt] *Beamont*, although he is unacquainted with it. Further, the name *Belvoir* [bīvə] from *Beuveir* < **Bēveir* (also *Belveire*), and *Bevis* [bīvis] from *Beufitz* are good examples. *Beaufort*, now [boufət], is no doubt to be explained like *Beaumont*. The spelling *Buforde* (Duke of) in the *Wentworth Papers* (1710) points to [bjū-] and must be due to association with the first syll. of *beau*tiful. On the other hand, *Beaulieu* = [bjūli] is normal. Cp. §§ 198, 265.

(*b*) The second element of *-u* diphthongs is also lost in M.E. before [ʃ, tʃ, dž] and the first element lengthened. Examples: M.E. *āge* from *auge*; *ānge* from *aunge*; *chivachie* from *chivauchie*; *Beauchamp* [bītʃəm], M.E. **Bēchamp* (Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, pp. 503, etc.).

Quantitative Changes in M.E.

[See very full treatment of the quantity of M.E. vowels in Morsbach's *M.E. Gr.*, pp. 65–117, and the article of Luick cited below.]

§ 173. Lengthening of O.E. Short Vowels.

(1) Already in Late O.E. short vowels were lengthened before the consonantal combinations *nd*, *mb*, *ld*, *ng*; cp. § 114 above.

(2) The vowels *a*, *e*, *o* in *Open Syllables* (that is, one where no consonant followed), in two-syllabled words, during the thirteenth century.

(*a*) O.E. *fæder*, M.E. *fāder*; O.E. *mācian*, M.E. *māken*; O.E. *sācu* 'dispute', etc., M.E. *sāke* 'crime', etc.; O.E. *hāra* 'hare', M.E. *hāre*.

(*b*) O.E. *bēran*, M.E. *bēren* 'bear'; O.E. *mēte* 'food', M.E. *mēte*; O.E. *mēre* 'lake', M.E. *mēre*; O.E. *stēlan* 'steal', M.E. *stēlen*.

(*c*) O.E. (*ġe*)*bōren* 'born', M.E. *bōren*; O.E. *smōca* 'smoke', M.E. *smōke*; O.E. *hōpu* 'hope', M.E. *hōpe*.

NOTE 1. The *ē* and *ō* due to lengthening of old short vowels in open syllables are slack vowels [ɛ̄, ɔ̄] respectively.

NOTE 2. Many words in O.E., which in the Nom. Sing. ended in a consonant, appear in M.E. with a vowel ending in all cases. Such words undergo lengthening: O.E. *hōl* 'hole', 'cave', M.E. *hōle*, from an inflected form. In fact the forms of nouns in M.E., and still more in Mod. Engl., very commonly point to their derivation from an O.E. or M.E. oblique case with an inflexion. On the other hand, doublets often arise in M.E.—a form with a long vowel from an inflected case, and one with a short vowel from an uninflected case: O.E. *blæc* adj. 'black', with inflected forms *blaca*, etc., gives two M.E. forms, *blāk* from *blæc*, and *blāke* from *blāca*. In

Mod. Engl. one or both forms may survive, in different dialects, or in the same dialect with specialized meaning: Mod. *black*, beside the Family Name *Blake*.

NOTE 3. It is easy to see how a final *-e* came later to be considered as a sign of length. The stressed vowels in L. M.E. *thrōte*, *hōpe*, *blāke*, etc., were necessarily long, and when later the *-e* ceased to be pronounced as a separate syllable, the preceding vowel of course kept its length, and the traditional *-e* in the spelling was associated with this, in distinction from *hŏp*, *blăk*, etc.

§ 174. Lengthening of ĭ and ŭ in Open Syllables in M.E.

It is now pretty generally accepted that, as stated by Luick (*Untersuchungen z. engl. Lautgesch.*, 1896; *Studien z. engl. Lautgesch.*, 1903), *ĭ* and *ŭ* in open syllables were lengthened, lowered, and made tense, before the beginning of the fourteenth century, so that *ĭ* in this situation became *ē*, and *ŭ* became *ō*. The examples in Mod. Standard English are not very frequent, as in various cases analogies of doublets without lengthening have preserved the short forms with *i* and *u*. In M.E. the examples are more numerous.

O.E. *wicu* 'week', M.E. *wēke*; O.E. *bitul*, M.E. *bētel*; O.E. *wifol*, M.E. *wēvel* 'weevil'; M.E. *ēuel* is explained by Luick as due to earlier M.E. *iuel* from O.E. *yfel*.

O.E. *wudu*, M.E. *wōde* 'wood'; O.E. *duru* 'door', M.E. *dōre*; O.E. *lufu* 'love', M.E. *lōve*; O.E. *sumu*, etc., M.E. *sōme* 'some'.

NOTE. Nearly all the forms in M.E. and Mod. Engl., explained by Luick by his law of lengthening *i* and *u*, may be, and often still are, explained in other ways. Thus *bētel*, it is said, may represent an O.E. (non-W.S.) *beotul*, *eo* becoming *e* and being lengthened in the open syllable; *wēke*, it is said, may be Early M.E. *wĕke*, O.E. *wĕcu*, with Anglian Smoothing from **weocu* (cp. § 127).

ēuel may merely have Kentish *e* for *y*, with lengthening in an open syllable. Against this it is alleged that the *ē* from the above sources was slack [ɛ̄] in M.E., whereas the *ē* in these words must have been tense since it was raised to [ī] among the first changes of Early Mod. Engl. (cp. § 229, Note 1).

The *o* in M.E. *love*, etc., is said by some to represent a short vowel and that *ŭ*, the *o* being merely graphic before *u*, *v*. In this case the word in M.E. was [lŭve]. This lengthening is established from the evidence of spellings and rhymes in M.E., and from the Mod. Dial. forms, for the North. The exact area over which it obtained is uncertain. The forms in Standard Engl. may be importations from another dialect.

§ 175. Shortening of O.E. Long Vowels in M.E.

(*a*) *Effect of Consonant Groups.*

Before certain groups of two consonants, other than *ld*, *nd*, etc., and before long consonants, long vowels are shortened.

The shortening takes place also before *ld*, etc., when a third consonant follows.

(1) *Before long or double stops*: O.E. *hȳdde* (pret. of *hȳdan* 'hide'), M.E. *hĭdde*; O.E. *lǣdde* 'led', M.E. *lĕdde*.

(2) *Before stop + stop*: O.E. *cēpte* (pret. of *cēpan*), M.E. *kĕpte*; M.E. *wĕpte*, pret. of *wēpen* 'weep'.

(3) *Before open consonant + stop*: *wĭsdom*, cp. *wīs*; *fĭftēne*, cp. *fīve*; O.E. *sōfte*, M.E. *sŏfte*.

(4) *Before stop + open consonant*: *dĕpthe*, cp. *dēpe* 'deep'; *Ĕdward*, O.E. *Ēadweard* = L. O.E. *Ædward*.

(5) *Before open consonant + m, l*: O.E. *wīfman*, M.E. *wĭmman*; M.E. *gŏsling*, cp. *gōs*; M.E. *dĕvles*, Pl. of *dēvel*.

(6) *Before open consonant + open consonant*: O.E. *hūswīf*, M.E. *hŭswĭf*.

(7) *Before ld, etc. + another consonant*: O.E. *cīld*, Pl. *cīldru*, M.E. *chīld*, *chĭldre*; O.E. *lāmbru*, Pl. of *lāmb*, M.E. *lōmb*, *lămbre* (Orm, *chilldre*, *lammbre*); O.E. *frēondscipe*, M.E. *frĕndschip*.

NOTE. The shortenings very commonly occur in compounds, as seen above, among which Pl. Ns. often exhibit good instances. Cp. such names as *Bradley*, where the first element is O.E. *brād* 'broad', *Depford*, where the first element is O.E. *dēop*, M.E. *dēpe*, etc.

(8) Shortening before *st* and *sch* seems to have been normal. Mod. Engl. has, it is true, mostly long forms before *-st*: *ghost*, O.E. *gāst*, M.E. *gōst*; *Christ*, M.E. *Crīst*; *priest*, M.E. *prēst*. The M.E. long vowels in this position may be explained from the inflected forms: *prēstes*. *gōstes* (syllable division *prē-stes*, *go-stes*), etc. Before *sch* [ʃ]: *wĭschen*, side by side with O.E. *wȳscan*; *flĕsch*, O.E. *flǣsċ*, we get also *flǣsċh*, *flēsch*, which must be explained on the analogy of the inflected *flē-sches*, etc.

§ 176. (*b*) Shortening of Long Vowels in Words of Three Syllables.

In three-syllabled words, the vowel of the first syllable, if long, is shortened; if short, is not lengthened, even though it stand in an open syllable (Luick, *Anglia*, xx).

These three-syllabled words occur chiefly in compounds such as Pl. Names, and otherwise as the inflected forms of words of two syllables.

M.E. *hōli* 'holy', but *hŏliday*; *Whĭtăker*, Pl. N. in Lancs., etc., of which first element is O.E. *hwīt* 'white'. Mod. *utter*, O.E. *ūterra*, shows this shortening.

NOTE. In M.E. there are many doublets, due to different conditions as to the number of syllables, in inflected and uninflected forms of Nouns

and Adjectives. In Nouns which end in *-er, el, en*, the inflected forms often lose the syllable before the *r, l, n*, thus *fāder*, but *fădres*, etc., *sādel* 'saddle', but *sădles*, etc. In these forms the shortening, or absence of lengthening, is due to the combinations *-dr-, -dl-*, etc.

On the other hand, in forms without syncope, such as *făderes*, etc., according to the principle formulated by Luick, the first syllable would remain short, although in an open syllable. Thus we may say that *fāder* and many other M.E. words normally had a long vowel in the Nom. and Acc. Sing., but a short vowel in the other cases. The result was, as a rule, that either a long or a short vowel was generalized, for all cases, Sing. and Pl. Thus we get two types—*fāder* and *făder*. The form in Mod. Standard Engl. is derived from the *făder* type, the Dialectal [fɛ̈ðə(r)] from M.E. *fāder* (see §§ 220, 225 Note, below).

§ 177. Shortening of Long Vowels in Unstressed Syllables.

Long vowels, whether in prefixes such as O.E. *ā-*, or, as is more frequent, in final syllables of compounds, are shortened in M.E. Thus O.E. *ārĭsan* is M.E. *ărĭsen*. So too O.E. *ān*, when used as an indefinite article, and therefore unstressed in the sentence, is shortened to *ăn, ă*, whereas when it stands for the numeral it remains long, as appears, e.g., in Chaucer, either as *ō*, or *ōn(e)*.

Most of these shortenings, however, occur in the second elements of compounds, in which the secondary stress of O.E. was further reduced in M.E.

O.E. *cyngestūn* 'Kingston', M.E. *Kingestŭn*; M.E. *hus(w)ĭf*, O.E. *wīf*; the Mod. Engl. Family Name *Wodehouse* = [wʊdəs] shows this shortening of O.E. *hūs* in the second element; M.E. *stĭrŏp* 'stirrup', in which the second element is O.E. *rāp* 'rope'.

§ 178. Treatment of Vowels in Scandinavian Loan-words in M.E.

This whole subject has been elaborately treated by Björkman, *Scandinavian Loan-words in Middle English*, Pt. I, 1900; Pt. II.

We are obliged here to state the main facts as simply and briefly as possible.

Scandinavian vowels were not on the whole very different from those of O.E., and in M.E. the majority of them undergo the same changes as those in native words. Scandinavian *ă, ĕ, ĭ, ў, ŭ, ŏ* are treated in the same way as the same vowels in native English words.

The chief sounds deserving notice are the diphthongs *ai, ei*, and *au*, which did not occur in O.E. in native words.

§ 179. *O. Scand. ai* in some cases was Englished to *ā* (the historically equivalent sound) in O.E. itself: O.E. *hāmsōcn* 'attacking an enemy in his house', O.Sc. *heim-*.

In O. West Scand. *ai* was preserved much longer than in East Scand., in fact it still survives in some Swed. Dialects at the present time.

In O. Danish, *ai* became *ei* which was simplified to *ē* in the pre-literary period.

Both *ai*, *ei*, and *ē* are found in M.E. loan-words: *baite* 'bait, food', *blayke* 'pale' (cp. the native M.E. form *blōke* from O.E. *blāc*), *wayke* 'weak' (O.E. *wāc*, M.E. *wōke*), *heil* 'hale, healthy', *reisen* 'raise' (cp. O.E. *rǣran* 'rear'), *þei*, *þeir* 'they, their', etc.

The Danish type probably occurs in M.E. *wēke* 'weak'.

§ **180.** *O. Scand. au.* This diphthong appears in M.E. in the three forms *au*, *ou*, *ō*. M.E. *gauk*, *gowk*, *gōke* 'cuckoo', 'fool', also as a man's name, cp. Lanc. *Gawthorpe*, M.E. *Gauke thorp*; M.E. *windoge* 'window', O.West Scand. *vindauga*; M.E. *coupe* 'pay for, buy', O.W. Scand. *kaupa*; also in M.E. Lancs. Pl. N. *Coupmoneswra*, Mod. *Capernwray*.

In Old Scandinavian *au* before *h* was early monophthongized to *ō*, hence M.E. *þōh*, *þōgh*, *þough*, etc. 'though' is from Scand. *þōh*, earlier **þauh*, compared with O.E. *þēāh* which gives M.E. *þēih*, etc.

NOTE. M.E. *þauh* probably represents O.E. *þēāh*, later *þǣh*, shortened to *þăh*, in unstressed positions, and retracted to *ă*, whence *au* develops before *h*. Cp. § 171.

The Treatment of Vowels in French Loan-words.

(See Jespersen, *Mod. Engl. Gr.*, pp. 130–45, etc., etc.; Kaluza, *Hist. Gr. d. engl. Spr.*, ii, pp. 45–72.)

§ **181.** Norman-French, or as they are also called, Anglo-Norman, words passed into English speech for the most part with approximately the same sounds which they already had. We may say that very few new vowel sounds were added to the language from this source. The nasalized vowels which stood before *n*, *m*, lost their nasalization, with the exception of *ã*, which retained its quality, at any rate, in the speech of the upper classes. On the peculiar development of N. Fr. *ã*, see below, §§ 183, 184. Another new sound was the diphthong *oi*; see § 200.

§ **182.** *N. F. ă* (1) remains: *balle* 'ball', *part*, *chartre*, *cacchen* 'catch'.

(2) Is lengthened in open syllables in the same way as O.E. *ă*, § 173. 2 (*a*): *plāce*, *cāge*, *rāge*, *corāge*, *fāme*, *āble*, etc.

(3) Lengthened before *st*: *chāste*, *hāste*, etc.

(4) Lengthened before a final single consonant: *estât*, *debât cās*, etc.

§ **183.** *N. F. ãn, ãm.* The nasalization is kept in the first instance, and the combinations *ãn*, *ãm* develop a diphthong *au* from the nasal vowel: *chaumbre*, *chaunticleer*, *graunten*, *chaunce*, *chaunge*, *daunce*, *auncient*, *exaumple*, *aunt*, etc.

§ **184.** By the side of the *au*-spellings, we frequently find *an*, *am* in M.E. The diphthongized forms have another development in Mod. Engl. from those without a diphthong: thus M.E. *haunten* yields Mod. [hɔ̄nt], whereas *hanten* yields [hānt]; cp. § 259 below. These double types are very common in Mod. Engl. and prove the existence of the undiphthongized forms in M.E. if we were inclined to believe that the distinction was merely a matter of spelling. Jespersen (*Mod. Engl. Gr.*, pp. 110, 111) explains the undiphthongized forms as due to the influence of Continental French, where the diphthongization did not occur, in the M.E. period.

This would hardly account for all the forms, as we cannot suppose a widespread or universal knowledge of Continental French, whereas the words in question, having come in from Norman French, were well established in the language. I am inclined to suggest that the distinction is due to social causes. The upper classes, in the Early M.E. period, knew and spoke Norman French, and the sound of the nasal vowel was natural to them. It was different with the lower sort of people, who did not speak French from the cradle. They would hardly pronounce loan-words with a sound that was quite unknown in their own English speech. Thus it seems probable that apart from Court circles *dãncen*, *ãnt* 'aunt' were pronounced simply *dăncen*, *ănt*, etc., and these forms underwent no diphthongization. Both types got into popular use, and appear to have been equally current in Early Modern.

NOTE. Before *-ge a* seems to have been lengthened in M.E. in the undiphthongized forms; the form *straange* (Trevisa) may be the direct ancestor of the Mod. form. Cp. § 225 below. See §§ 171 (9), Note, and 172 (*b*) above for *chaynge*, etc.

§ **185.** **N. F. ĕ** is preserved in M.E. in close syllables: *dĕtte*, *lĕttre*, *sĕrchen*; lengthened before *-st*: *fēst*, *bēst* 'beast'.

§ **186.** **N. F. ē**, M.E. *ē*: *degrée*, *pouertée*, *deintée* 'dignity, value', *profète*, *clēre*, *frēre* 'brother'.

§ **187.** **N. F. ī** (*i* in open syllable), M.E. *ī*: *mercíe*, *folíe*, *vīce*, *īle*, *sīre*, *bībel*.

§ 188. **N.F. e, ē from O.Fr. ie, M.E. e.** In close syllables: *aleggen*, *cerge* 'candle'. Lengthened in open syllables: *grēuen* 'grieve', *pēce* 'piece', *sēge*, *manére*, *chére* 'face, appearance'; also before a single final consonant: *greef*, *breef*, *squiér*. This *ē* is often written *ie*; see § 161, p. 102 above.

§ 189. **N.F. ŏ** preserved in close syllables: *propre*, *cofre*, *force*, etc. Lengthened in open syllables = [ō]: *cōte* 'coat', *suppósen*, *nōble*, *rōse*; also before *st*: *hōst*, *rōst*.

§ 190. **N.F. ŭ, ū = [ŭ]** remains or becomes short in M.E. before several consonants: *court*, *purse*, *turnen*.

ŭ in open syllables and before a single final consonant becomes *ū* in N.F. and remains as such in M.E.: *vou* 'vow', *goute*, *spouse*, *flour* 'flower', *labour*, *culour*.

§ 191. **N.F. ŭ** = M.E. *ū*: *mount*, *croune*, *ounce*, *countre*.

§ 192. **N.F. [ø] eo, ue, from O.Fr. ue.** Variously written *oe*, *ue*, *e* as in *poeple*, *people*, *peple*, *preef* 'proof', *boef*, *beef*, etc. It seems likely that these words had the sound [ø] (§ 169), which either survived as a rounded vowel, or, in other dialects, was unrounded to [ē]. This would explain the variations in spelling *pēple*, *people*. *eo* no doubt represented [ø]. We have retained this spelling in the last word and in *jeopardy*, which is also written *juparti*, *juperdi* in M.E. where *u* = [ȳ].

§ 193. **N.F. u, ū = [y̆] in M.E.** This sound remains in M.E. and the great majority of words containing it are of Fr. origin. How far it differed, or in what way, from the O.E. *y̆* (§§ 108, 109, 119), also written *u* in M.E., it is difficult to determine. Since, however, the sound in Fr. words does not undergo the fluctuations in time and place which characterize the sound in Native words, it is fair to suppose that there was some difference between them. Possibly the Fr. [y] was tenser and higher than the English sound.

Examples of short *ŭ* [y] in M.E.: *just*, *juge*, *sepulcre*, etc. Lengthened in stressed open syllables: *pursúen*, *rūde*, *sūre*, *natúre*, *creatúre*, *vertúe*, *vertew*.

§ 194. **N.F. üi** [ȳi] becomes simply [ȳ], generally written *ui*, *uy*, in M.E.: *fruit*, *nuisance*.

§ 195. **N.F. Diphthongs in M.E.**

N.F. ai remains in M.E.: *gai*, *delái*, *tráitre*, *grain*, *chapelain*, *batáile*, *vitáiles*.

N.F. *ai*, when it does not bear the chief accent, is generally monophthongized to *e* in M.E.: *resóun*, *sesóun*, *tresóun*; but *raisoun*, etc., also occur.

§ 196. **N.F. au remains in M.E.**: *faute*, *cause*, *baume*, *sauf* 'safe', *auter* 'altar', *sauvage*, *laundere* from *lavendere* 'washer-woman'.

NOTE. Before lip-consonants *au* becomes *ā* already in M.E. in some cases: *saaf* (Wycl.). Cp. § 172 (*a*).

§ 197. **N.F. ei remains in M.E.**: *palefréi*, *monéie*, *feiþ*, *faiþ* 'faith', *lei* 'law', *streit* 'narrow', *burgeis*.

In Central Fr., O.Fr. *ei* becomes *oi*, and M.E. *exploit*, *coi* are from this source.

§ 198. **N.F. eau** from earlier *eal* + consonant becomes *eu* in M.E.: *beutée*, *beautée*.

§ 199. **N.F. eu, ieu remains as eu in M.E.**:—*Jew*, *reule*. [The last word may also represent O.E. *regol*, M.E. *rewel*.]

§ 200. **N.F. oi remains in M.E.**: *joie*, *cloistre*, *vois*, *chois*, *destroien*, *point*, *boilen*.

§ 201. **Table of Late M.E. Vowels, and their Sources.**

M.E. ă, O.E. *ă*, *æ̆*, as in *căt*, *băk*, §§ 159, 160.

M.E. e
- O.E. *e*, as in *bed*, *setten*.
- O.E. *ĕo*, as in *hĕrte*, *erþe*, etc., § 168.
- O.E. *ĕa*, as in *herm*, etc., § 167.

M.E. ĭ
- O.E. *ĭ*, as in *sĭtten*, *chĭldre*, etc.
- O.E. *y̆* (in Nth., E. Midl. and in S.W. before front consonant), as in *hill*, *pit*, *brigge*, § 158 (*f*).

M.E. ŏ
- O.E. *ŏ*, as in *flŏk*, *Gŏdd*, etc.
- O.E. *ō* shortened, as in *gŏsling*, *blŏsme*, etc., § 175 (5).

M.E. ŭ, O.E. *ŭ*, as in *sŭne* (*sŏne*).

M.E. y̆ (written *u*), O.E. *y̆*: *hull*, *rugge* (in W. and Central Midlands and Sth.-West), § 158 (*c*); O. Fr. *ü*, as in *juge*, etc., § 193.

M.E. ā
- O.E. *ă* in open syllables, as in *māken*, *fāder*, etc., § 173 (2).
- O.Fr. *ā*, as in *fāme*, *dāme*, etc., § ~~192~~ (2).

M.E. ē (1) = [ē]
- O.E. *ē*, as in *swēte*, *hē*, *hēren*, etc.
- O.E. *ē* from *ǣ*[1] (non-W.S.), as in *dēd* 'deed', *wēren*, etc., § 161.
- O.E. *ēo*, as in *feend*, *hēld*, § 169.
- O.E. *ĭ* in open syllables, as in *wēke*, § 174.
- O.E. *ē* (Kentish), earlier *ȳ*, § 158 (*b*).
- O.E. *ē* (Kentish) from *ā-i*, § 161.

M.E. ē (2) = [ɛ̄]
- O.E. ǣ², as in *dēlen, clēne*, etc., § 161.
- O.E. ǣ¹ (only in Sthn. forms), as in *dēde, strēte*, etc., §§ 161, 162.
- O.E. *ēa*, as in *rēde* (*reade*) 'red', *dēþe* (*deaþe*), etc., § 164.
- O.E. *ĕ* in open syllables, as in *mēte, bēren*, etc., § 173 (*b*) and Notes.
- O.E. *ĕ* (Kt. fr. *y*) in open sylls. as in *ēuel*, § 174, Note.

M.E. ī, O.E. *ī*, as in *wīne, wīfe, chīld*, etc.; Earlier M.E. *eġ, eȝ* : *ȳe* 'eye', *hīe* 'high', *nīh* 'nigh'.

M.E. ō (1) = [ō^{w}]
- O.E. *ō*, as in *gōde, cōl*, § 163.
- O.E. *ŭ* in open syllables, as in *wōde* 'wood', etc., § 174.
- O.Fr. *ō*, as in *fōle* 'fool'.

M.E. ō (2) = [ɔ̄]
- O.E. *ā*, as in *hōm, stōn, cōld*, etc., § 156.
- O.E. *ŏ* in open syllables, as in *bōren, hōpe*, etc., § 173 (*c*) and Notes.
- O.Fr. *ŏ* in open syllables, as in *cōte* 'coat', § 189.

M.E. ū (written *ou*, etc.)
- O.E. *ū*, as in *house, foul, nou, young*, etc., § 152.
- O.E. *ōȝ, ōh*, as in *plou, inou*, etc., § 171 (9).
- O.Fr. *ū*, as in *floure, doute, courte*, § 190.

M.E. [ȳ] (written *u, ui*)
- O.E. *ȳ* (in W. and Central Midl. and S.W.), as in *huthe* 'landing-place', *bruisen, huiren* 'hear', §§ 158 (*c*), 170.
- O.E. *ēo* (in W. Midl. and S.W.), as in *lud* 'people', *dure* 'dear', *hulden* pret. pl. 'held', § 169.
- O.Fr. *ü*, as in *fruit, suit*, etc.

Diphthongs.

M.E. ai, O.E. *æ̆ġ*, as in *dai*, § 171 (1).
M.E. ei, O.E. *ĕġ*, as in *wĕi, leide*, § 171 (2).
M.E. oi, O.Fr. *oi*, as in *joie, oystre*, § 200.

M.E. au
- O.E. *-ăg-*, as in *drawen, lawe*, § 171 (7 *a*).
- O.Fr. *au*, as in *faute*, § 196.
- O.Fr. *an*, as in *haunten, daunten*, § 183.

M.E. ŏu, O.E. *-og-, ŏh*, as in *dŏuhter*.

M.E. ēi
- O.E. *ǣġ*, as in *ēi* 'egg', § 171 (3 *a*).
- O.E. *ēag* (*ǣg*), as in *ēye* 'eye', § 171 (3 *b*).

M.E. ēu { O.E. *ēaw*, as in *dēu, schewen*, § 171 (5).
O.E. *ēow*, as in *blēw, trēue*, § 171 (6).
O.Fr. *eau*, as in *bēutée*, § 198.

M.E. ōu, O.E. *-oga*, as in *bōuwe*, O.E. *bŏga* 'bow', § 171 (8).

Summary of the chief characteristics of the M.E. Dialect Groups.

§ 202. KENTISH

A. **Sounds.**

(1) *e* written for O.E. *æ*; this is later displaced by Midl. *a*: O.E. *eald*, Late O.E. *æld* appears as *ēld*.

(2) *ye, ie* for O.E. *ĕō*: *yerþe, chiese, chyese*, etc.

(3) *ya, ia* for O.E. *ĕā*: *hyalde, dyaþ*.

(4) (*a*) *ē* = [ē] for O.E. *æ* from *ā—i*: *del, clēne*; (*b*) [*ē*] for Pr. O.E. *æ*: *dēd* (as in Nthmb. and Merc.).

(5) *ĕ* for O.E. *y̆* from *ŭ—i* (*ĕ* in Lt. O.Kt.): *velle* 'fill', *hēþ* 'landing-place', *uēr* 'fire'.

(6) *z-* for *s-*: *zēche* 'seek'.

(7) *u-, v-* for *f-*: *uless* 'flesh', *uox* 'fox'.

B. **Accidence.**

(8) Retention of *y-* in P. P.
(9) Dropping of *-n* in P. P. and Inf.
(10) Pres. Part. in *-inde*.
(11) 3rd P. Pres. Sing. } in *-eþ*.
(12) Pl. Pres. }
(13) Pl. Imperat. }

} As in S.W.

(14) *she*, etc., unknown in Fem. Pers. Pron.; usual form *hi*.

(15) *their, them, they*, unknown; only *here, hem, hi*, etc.

(16) The curious form *his* Acc. Pl. 3rd Pers.

§ 203. SOUTH-WEST

A. **Sounds.**

(1) O.E. *æ* (W. Gmc. *ā*) becomes *ē* [ē]: *dēd* = [dēd]. (Also in early London Dialect.)

(2) *ŭ* [y̆] for O.E. *y̆*, except before front consonant. (As in W. and Central Midl. except that unrounding before front consonant less systematic here than in Sthn.)

(3) O.E. *ă* remains as *e* [ĕ] in Early texts; this type, however, replaced by Angl. *ă* earlier than in Kentish.

(4) O.E. *ā* becomes [ɔ̄], written *o*, *oa*, etc. (as in Kent and Midl.).

(5) W.S. *ĭe̯* (*i*-mutation of *e̯ă*), Late W.S. *y̆*, retained, and written *u*, or often *ui* when long.

(6) O.E. initial *f-* written *u*, *v* (as in Kentish).

B. **Accidence.**

The principal features are the same as those noted for Kentish.

The forms of Fem. Pers. Pron. Nom. are *heo*, *he*, *hue*, *ha*.

The Pret. of Str. Vbs. formed according to P.P. type.

MIDLAND = Saunders ...

§ 204. **East and West Midl. have in common:**

O.E. *ā* becomes *ō* (as in Sth.); Late O.E. (Angl.) *ā*+*ld* appears as *ōld*.

O.E. *ǣ* (*i*-mutation of *ā*) appears as [ɛ̄], written *e* (as in Sth. and Nth.).

O.E. *ǣ* (Pr. O.E. *ǣ*, non-W.S. *ē*) remains as [ē], as in Kentish.

O.E. *æ̆* becomes *ă*, or, in open syllables, *ā*.

O.E. *ē* (*i*-mutation of *e̯ā*) remains as *e* as in Kentish and Nth.

-n is generally preserved, except after *-ng-*, *-nd*, etc.

Pres. Sing. *-e*, *-est*, *-eþ*. (See under E. and W. Midl.)

Pres. Pl. in *-en*.

Pres. Part. in *-ende*.

þey, *thei*, etc., in Nom. Pl., occurs earlier than in Sth.

§ 205. **E. Midl. Features:**

O.E. *y̆*, generally *ĭ*, as in North; in Suffolk also *ĕ*.

O.E. *e̯ŏ*, generally = *ĕ*.

Unstressed vowels in suffixes appear as *e*: *-es*, *-ed*, *-en*.

3rd Pers. Pres. Sing. *þei*, *þeim*, *þeir* occur (sporadically); Nom. earlier than in W. Midl. (Already in Orm, Hav. and Brunne, *þey*, but *hem*; Bokenham, *thei*, and *them* by side of *hem*.)

Fem. Pron. *sċæ*, *sche*, *scho* (by side of *h*-forms) appear earlier than in W. Midl. (Laud. Chr., Best., Gen. and Ex., Hav.).

§ 206. WEST MIDLAND FEATURES

A. **Sounds.**

O.E. *y̆* retained to a great extent; written *u*, *uy*, *ui*.

O.E. *a* before nasal consonant, frequently *o*: *con*, *lond*, etc.

Unstressed, flexional syllables often have *u*: *us*, *-ud*, etc.
O.E. *ĕō* becomes a rounded vowel, later often written *u* = [y].

B. **Accidence.**

2nd and 3rd P. Sing. Pres. often has *-s*, *-es*, *-us* (Allit. P. and W. of Pal.) as in North.
Pres. Part. often ends in *-and* as in North.
þey, later than in E. Midl. (Allit. P.); *h*-form survives in J. of Ar.
þeim, *þeir* do not occur in W. Midl. texts.
sche, etc., appears much later than in E. Midl. Typical forms *ho* and *hue* preserved instead of, or alongside of *sche*, etc.

§ **207.** NORTHERN = Northern Dialect

A. **Sounds.**

(1) O.E. *ā* not rounded as in Midl. and Sth. but fronted to [ǣ], etc. The spelling *a* remains, but later the fronted vowel is often written *ai*.
(2) O.E. *y̆* unrounded to *ĭ*. (As in E. Midl.)
(3) O.E. *ō* becomes a sound identical with that of Fr. *u*, with which it rhymes: e.g. *sone—fortone*. This Nthn. sound is written *o*, *oi*, *oy*, *u*, *ui*.

B. **Accidence.**

2nd and 3rd Pers. Pres. Sing. *-s*.
Pl. Pres. ends in *-s*.
Pres. Part. ends in *-and*.
Pret. Pl. of Strong Vbs. formed on type of Sing.
Fem. Pers. Pron. *scho*, etc.
Pron. of 3rd Pers. Pl.: *þai*, *þair*, *þaim*, etc.; no *h*-forms.
Loss of suffix syllable of Inf.

NOTE. The chief peculiarities of the Accidence of the various texts are dealt with in Chapter VIII below.

CHAPTER VII

HISTORY OF ENGLISH SOUNDS

III. The Modern Period

§ **208.** The changes which overtook the English vowel system during the late M.E. and the Early Modern periods were remarkable and thorough. Through the agency of forces at work perhaps from 1400 onwards, English vowel sounds, which had hitherto preserved, comparatively speaking, unaltered, their original, or as it is sometimes called, their Continental shape, gradually passed into those sounds which exist at the present day. We know, approximately, the M.E. complexions of the vowel sounds ; we know what they have become. The problems are to determine what path of change each sound pursued, between M.E. and present-day English, and further, when the several changes started, and at what approximate date or period the various stages, in the different series of changes, were reached.

Light upon these problems is cast from two main sources: the Grammarians, English and foreign, who, to the best of their ability, discuss English pronunciation as it existed in their own day, and the scattered phonetic spellings which occur, generally in familiar writings, letters, etc., of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The writers of these documents (the Paston Letters, the Cely Papers, etc.) are often rather illiterate persons, and they depart, from time to time, from the traditional spelling, in favour of one which is more phonetic. These 'mistakes' in spelling may often afford most valuable information regarding a pronunciation which has already come into vogue, although the professed writers on pronunciation may not condescend to notice it till considerably later.

The question of the history of English pronunciation from the Early Modern period onwards is one that of late years has greatly occupied the attention of English scholars. It may be well to enumerate some of the chief names associated with this branch of study.

The study was initiated by the late A. J. Ellis in his monumental work on *Early English Pronunciation*, and continued by Sweet in his *History of English Sounds*. During the last fifteen years or so, further discussion of the problems, to a great extent in the light of a better knowledge of the sounds of present-day English Dialects, has been carried on by Luick, Jespersen, Viëtor, Horn, and Zachrisson, to mention no more.

The various books of Luick, Jesperson, and Horn, marked a new departure in our knowledge of the facts and in their interpretation. Quite recently, the appearance of Zachrisson's remarkable work on the *Pronunciation of English Vowels from* 1400 *to* 1700 has, it must be allowed, to a great extent put the whole matter on a new footing.

The work of Luick has emphasized the importance of taking the phenomena exhibited by the Modern English Dialects into consideration when dealing with the problem of the development of Standard English Pronunciation, both because these not infrequently represent actually stages of growth through which the Standard language has passed, and also because some of the apparent abnormalities in the development of Standard English may be accounted for by assuming that forms have been borrowed, during the Modern period, from this or that popular dialect. It should also be said that during the period since Ellis and Sweet fresh evidence as to the sounds of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries has been collected from authors whose works they had not investigated, and that the whole evidence has been reviewed afresh by recent writers, who have re-examined, and checked one with the other, the statements of the old Grammarians. Many of the latter, too, have been made accessible to students in reprints.

The new points in Zachrisson's methods are that he approaches the question with an open mind and does not allow the interpretations put hitherto by recent writers upon the Grammarians' statements to bias his mind, nor prevent him from reaching new conclusions which seem justified by all the evidence. Again, he puts together the statements made by French Grammarians on one hand, and by the English on the other, and examines each independently. Lastly, he gives exhaustive critical lists of phonetic spellings of all the vowel sounds, drawn from late fifteenth and early sixteenth-century collections of letters and such documents. All this evidence is subjected by Zachrisson to the closest and most critical scrutiny. The general result of this investigation is, that the author comes to the conclusion that the sound changes to

which the present-day pronunciation of Standard English owes its characteristic features had begun as early as the fifteenth century, and further that, '*broadly speaking*, the present pronunciation was established towards the end of the seventeenth century'.

With regard to the testimony of the Grammarians concerning their own pronunciation, Zachrisson thinks that they were often much influenced by the traditional spelling of words, and that they 'recommended, in their works, theoretical forms of pronunciation which were not sanctioned by common usage'. Now it is, on the whole, a new view to place the beginnings of the 'great vowel shift', as Jespersen calls it, as far back as the fifteenth century, and it is new to consider the Grammarians as so far behind their age as Zachrisson evidently does. There is much also in his work that differs in detail from commonly received opinions.

Putting detail aside, I am inclined to agree in the main with Zachrisson's opinion of the early Grammarians, though I would not go quite so far as he does in this respect; I agree that many of the sound changes began at least as early as the fifteenth century (cf. § 163, Note, above, on *ū* from M.E. *ō*); I think we are not yet justified in holding that the present pronunciation was practically arrived at as early as the end of the seventeenth century.

There are, of course, many points of detail upon which opinions will long continue to differ.

It will not be possible, as a rule, from lack of space, to give the actual statements of the early writers on pronunciation in the following account, and for the same reason it will not be possible either to discuss the conflicting views of the present day as to what the Grammarians meant, except in a few cases where it seems absolutely necessary to do so. It must be said, however, that in points of detail views differ considerably, and a full treatment of the subject at the present time is apt to become both tedious and obscure from the fact that as much time is usually taken up by enumerating and discussing the views of differing authorities, as is required for a proper setting forth of the material upon which the discrepant interpretations are based. Again, scholars disagree, not only as to what the early writers mean, and upon the value to be attached to this or that man's statement, but also as to the actual path of change followed by the sounds.

§ **209.** The early Grammarians spring from various social classes; they bring to their task various degrees of aptitude

and preparedness; they differ therefore in the opportunities for knowing the habits of the *best* speakers of their time, and in their ability to inform us regarding these. Some are pedantic, hide-bound, impatient of, and hostile to, new tendencies; others are sensible, free from prejudice, and honestly anxious to tell the truth and conceal nothing. The methods they employ consist, on the one hand, in describing a sound by telling us that it is like, or identical with, a sound in one or more foreign languages, and on the other, by giving an account of the position of the tongue and lips in pronouncing the sound. Some of these writers employ a phonetic notation of their own devising, which has the advantage of letting us know, at least, in which words the same sound occurred in their day. They all give lists, sometimes rather meagre, which serve this purpose. Writers of the same period do not appear, in all cases, to give the same account of the same original sound; the grouping of words pronounced alike does not invariably agree either among contemporaries, or with our present-day usage.

§ **210.** Luick, and I agree with him, ascribes some of these variants to social distinctions, and dialectal influence. (See Luick, *Anglia*, xiv. 271, xvi. 468–9; and *Untersuchungen z. engl. Lautgeschichte*, p. 313; and Wyld, *Class Dialect and Standard English*, in *Mackay Misc.*, p. 283). When Luick speaks of the speech of the lower classes, he is thinking chiefly of their influence as speakers of *Regional Dialect*, whereas, while not denying this factor, I urge in addition the importance of *Class Dialects*. Jespersen, however, in his *Modern English Gr.*, I, Preface, p. vi, denies the influence of the Dialects in the development of Standard English. Zachrisson, again, is of the opinion that more than one type of pronunciation cannot be proved from the early Grammarians (*English Vowels*, p. 225). This only shows how ambiguous these worthies are, and how differently their statements may be interpreted to-day by different scholars.

Modern English Spelling.

§ **211.** The discrepancy which exists at the present time between sound and symbol in English is due to the fact that the spelling was practically fixed, in all its essential features, by Caxton and the early printers, in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Caxton's spelling is virtually that of late M.E. He introduces no new spellings to indicate the sound changes which had already come about since the typical

Central M.E. period. And yet, as we shall see, many important changes in vowel sounds must have been well established in Caxton's time: e.g. the fronting of M.E. *ā*, the raising of *ē*, the raising and over-rounding of old tense *ō* to [ū]. See §§ 225, 236.

It seems that it takes men a long time to realize that a sound change has really taken place, and that the old symbol is no longer adequate. Just as people nowadays talk cheerfully of 'the *a*-sound in *hall*', or 'the *u*-sound in *but*' [jū-*saund* in bat], so no doubt people in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries spoke of 'the *ō*-sound in *moon*' [ðĭ ō-*saund* in mūn]. Caxton was evidently not in favour of a phonetic spelling, and there is little or nothing in his orthography to indicate that important changes had occurred in English since the hey-day of Chaucer. It is left for more or less illiterate persons, as a rule, to betray what has happened by spellings like *teke* for *take*, or *floud* for *flood*. In any case, Caxton stuck to the traditional M.E. spelling of the vowel sounds, and although these sounds have gone on changing ever since, in many cases we still adhere, in the main, to the example which he set. Had the introduction of printing been delayed another hundred years, it is hardly conceivable that the new sounds should not have found graphic expression. Even Caxton lapses into the phonetic spelling *hyre* = [hīr] 'hear' for M.E. *hēren*. This, however, may represent not the Anglian type, but the Sthn. type with O.E. *īe*, later *ī* (§ 170).

§ **212.** The most systematic distinction made in the spelling of vowels is the writing of *ee*, *ie*, or *ei*, especially the first, for old tense *ē*, *deed*, etc., which had become [ī] by Caxton's day, and of *ea* for the old slack *e*, *read*, etc., which had not yet been raised to the high position. Other distinctions, though by no means so systematically made, are *oa* or *o* + cons. + *e* for old slack *ō* as in *throat*, *rose* (Pret.), etc., and *oo* for old tense *ō* in *good*, etc., which in Caxton's time had already become [ū]. We still preserve *oo* pretty generally for this old tense *o*, so much so that 'double *o*' for many people simply means either [ū] as in *moon*, or [ŭ] as in *look*.

We preserve also *ie* in *thieve*, and *ee* in *deed* for old tense *ē*. This habit becomes more and more fixed during the sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth by 'the *ee*-sound' [ī] is always meant. Similarly *ea* as *bead*, etc., generally represents now, as in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, old slack *ē*, which has now become [ī] like the old tense *ē*. *see*, O.E. *sēon*, M.E. *sē(n)*, [ē], compared with *sea*, O.E. *sǣ*, M.E. *see*, [ē], are an instructive pair of words in this respect.

§ **213.** Another feature, now fixed in our spelling, which must be regarded as a phonetic device, is the final *-e* in *hope*, etc., as a mark of length. The reason for this in a number of words is explained above, § 173, Note 3. When *-e* ceased to be pronounced as a separate syllable, which happened during the fifteenth century, it was retained in spelling for the above purpose in words where it belonged historically, and was also added in a number of others, such as *bone*, where it had no historical sanction. Final *-e* came to be regarded as such an indubitable mark of length in the preceding vowel that we find later writers speaking of it as having the 'power' of lengthening this!

§ **214.** Other changes made in the habitual M.E. spelling have no phonetic object. Some are due to a desire to show the connexion of English words with Latin or French. Of these may be mentioned *debt*, *doubt*, *perfect*, *aucthor*, *isle*, *fault*, for M.E. *dette*, *doute*, *parfit*, *autor*, *ile*, *faute*. The *b* in *debt*, *doubt* never affected the pronunciation, nor the *s* of *isle*, but [pāfikt, ōþə, fōlt] owe their present form to the spelling. *Isle* is an imitation of Middle French *isle*, where the *s* is an etymological fancy introduced to show connexion with Lat. *insula*, long after the sound had vanished. As a matter of fact this word was also connected by the would-be etymologists with M.E. *īland*, with the result that an *s* was written here too. M.E. *ī* or *īȝ* is from O.E. *iġe* 'island', a pure native word. The old ending *-tioun*, *-cioun*, e. g. in M.E. *nacioun*, has been altered after the Latin model to *-tion*, so that the connexion with the M.E. spelling is lost without any phonetic gain.

As printed books became more widespread, it was natural that spelling should crystallize, both for the convenience of the printer, and from the increased familiarity of the reader with his system. The vagaries of the sixteenth and early seventeenth-century spelling represent experiments in search of the most convenient method. After the middle of the seventeenth century, the changes and varieties are but trifling, and English spelling may be said to have been fixed finally by Dr. Johnson's Dictionary (1755). Since then nothing more serious than the habit of universally writing *public*, etc., instead of *publick*, etc., has come about.

§ **215.** Another change of pure convenience is the definite use of *v*, *j* for consonants, and *u*, *i* for vowels. As late as the seventeenth century usage was quite unsettled in this respect, the symbols *v*, *u* being often used indifferently in both functions.

§ **216.** The numerous sixteenth and seventeenth-century attempts at reforming English spelling on a phonetic basis came to nothing, just as those in our own day have been hitherto shipwrecked, by the total lack of general interest in the question.

Probably no one really wants English Spelling 'reformed' for ordinary purposes, except a handful of faddists, and most of these have systems of their own which they are anxious to float.

For scientific purposes it is a different matter; here a systematic use of phonetic symbols to express the sounds we are discussing is absolutely essential. From a phonetic point of view, English spelling is almost the worst imaginable, but the chances of its being altered now seem very remote. Many persons who used to talk with light hearts of reforming English Spelling have been seriously frightened and rendered hostile to any change by the proposals of the Simplified Spelling Society. To them it appears that the well-intentioned efforts of these enthusiasts merely substitute fresh difficulties for those already familiar. Experiment alone can show whether children would take more kindly and readily to this system, than to that over which their ancestors, in their youth, have groaned so long.

The Vowels in Detail

Isolative Treatment.

§ **217. M.E. ă (cp. §§ 159, 160) is fronted to** [æ].

So far as the testimony of the Grammarians goes, the old back sound remained in the 'best English' throughout the sixteenth century. Early in the next century, however, there are indications of fronting in their descriptions, but it is not till 1685 that we have a definite description of a low front. It is certain, however, that the sound had developed long before this. Already in the sixteenth century Palgrave indeed hints, with disapproval, at the existence of another sound than [*a*]. A front pronunciation is pretty certain from Shakespeare's rhymes *scratch—wretch* (Victor, *Sh. Pr.*, p. 208), *neck—back* (Horn, § 40), both from *Venus and Adonis*. The spellings *begen* 'began', *zastyrday* 'yesterday', which occur in Paston Letters (Norfolk), are said by Neumann, pp. 16, 31, to show that *ă* had already become [æ] in the fifteenth century. Zachrisson, p. 58, also gives *understend—fend* 'found', M.E. *fand*; *rensackyd* from the same documents, but does not draw

from such forms the inference that *a* had been fronted. Indeed, nearly all the spellings of this kind adduced are capable of other explanation (Zachrisson, pp. 59–61). Diehl (*Engl. Schreibung und Ausspr.*, p. 9) gives the spelling *beck* 'back' from documents of 1485, *at stren* 'at strand' 1554, *ectes* 'acts' 1598, etc.

In some parts of the country, then, the fronting may have begun in the fifteenth century and been completed by the end of that century; in the Standard language it seems to have been going on perhaps from early in the sixteenth century, and to have been fully developed universally by the end of it. It took the Grammarians some time longer to recognize, and to find means for describing the new sound. Once established, [æ] has remained unchanged.

Combinative developments of M.E. ă in the Modern Period.

§ 218. The combination al becomes [*au*l].

This process is very similar to that described in §§ 171. 7 (*a*), 196, 183 above, of the O.E. Fracture. It takes place primarily in stressed syllables, when *-al* is final, as in *all, small, fall*, etc., also when *al* is followed by another consonant—*salt, malt, talk, bald, half, calf*. When a vowel follows the *l*, no diphthongization occurs—*hallow, fallow, valley*, etc.

The diphthong is fully established at least as early as the third quarter of the fifteenth century, as is shown by the spellings in the Cely Papers (1475–88) (cf. Süssbier, p. 25), e. g. *hawlfe, fawllyn, hawltyd, caullnys* 'calves', etc. (the vowel of the Pl. suffix was already lost in pronunciation, but in any case the *au* here could be explained from the Sing. *caulf*). The early Grammarians all describe a diphthong in these and other similar words. This [*au*] like the older M.E. *au* (§§ 171. 7 (*a*), 196, 183) subsequently became [ɔ̄] except before lip-cons. Its history will, however, be discussed under M.E. *au*. See § 260 below.

The pronunciation [ɔ̄l] at the present day always implies an earlier [*au*l].

NOTE. *Shall* = [ʃæl] is derived from Early Mod. *shăl* without diphthongization. This is the unstressed form. *Shăl* would also occur in the breath-group *shăl I*. On the other hand, the strong form *shaul* is recorded by the early Grammarians, and its descendant [ʃɔ̄l] is heard to-day in some dialects.

§ 219. M.E. ă before [s, f, þ].

In M.E. words like *ăske, grăs, păssen*, etc.; *chăf, stăf, crăft, ăfter*, etc.; *băþ, păþ*, etc., the vowel was first fronted in the

usual way, giving [tʃæf, græs, pæþ] and so on, and then lengthened to [tʃǣf, grǣs, pǣþ], etc. This [ǣ] was again retracted to [ā] giving the present-day [tʃāf, grās, pāþ]. The early Grammarians appear to differ in their pronunciation of these groups of words, just as we differ to some extent nowadays. The lengthening is certainly late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, and the retraction, among some speakers, took place before the close of the latter. On the other hand [grās], etc. appear to have existed already in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, according to some Grammarians, but [ǣ] is unmistakably described still by late eighteenth-century writers. Almost all stages [ă, æ, ǣ, ā] exist to-day in different Regional and Class Dialects. In spite of Zachrisson's disbelief in variant developments, I cannot escape the conviction that they are recorded by the early Grammarians in the above as in other classes of words, and I attribute them largely to Class Dialect.

NOTE 1. Jespersen, *Mod. E. G.*, i, pp. 304–310, rejects the ordinary view of the development of [ā] in present-day English, and believes that it is of L.M.E. or Early Mod. origin, and has been retained unaltered. The difficulty of believing in the application of his complicated theory of 'preservative analogy' here appears very great.

NOTE 2. Present-day [hæþ, hæst] instead of [hāþ, hāst] are due to the analogy of [hæv], q. v., § 225, Note.

§ **220.** The words *father*, *rather* fall under the above statement. They are developed out of the M.E. short forms *făther*, *răther* (cp. § 176, Note), the series being [fă̆ðer < fæ̆ðər < fǣðər < fāðər]. Provincial [gāðər] has had the same development.

§ **221.** If, as seems probable, undiphthongized forms of *calf*, *half*, *laugh* also existed, and we might assume E. Mod. [kă̆(l)f, hă̆(l)f, lă̆f] by the side of [kau(l)f, hau(l)f, lauχ, lauf], then the former group would belong entirely to other *ăf*-words, and the development would be [lă̆f < læ̆f < lǣf < lāf]. *To laffe* occurs in 1563 in a letter of Barnabe Googe; cp. Arber's Reprint, p. 12. This probably represents [lă̆f]. For the orthodox explanation of the derivation of the [ā] in these words from [au], see § 260 below.

§ **222. The M.E. combination -ar.**

M.E. *ăr* became [ăr] and this was lengthened to [ǣr] in the first instance before another consonant—[hǣrd, pǣrt], but still [ær, fær], etc. (Sweet, *H. E. S.*, § 780). This is seventeenth century, but before the end of the century the lengthening seems to have involved those words also in which no con-

sonant followed the *r*. This [ǣ] developed to [*ā*] like that in § 219.

Such is the origin of our present-day [*ā*] in *car*, *are*, *card*, *heart*, *hard*, etc., etc. In fact [*ā*] in present-day English always goes back to M.E. and Early Mod. *ă* with subsequent fronting and lengthening as described above.

Are [*ā*] is not from the M.E. *āre*(*n*) type, which produced the now obsolete [ēr, eər] that used to be written 'air' by comic writers, but from the M.E. variant *ăre* which occurred in unstressed positions.

Present-day *clerk*, *Berks.*, *Bertie*, *Berkley*, *hearth*, *Derby* [klāk, bāks, bāti, hāþ, bākli, dābi], in spite of the spelling, are derived from a M.E. *clărk*, *Bărks*(*chire*), *Dărbi*, *Bărklei*, etc.

Concerning the history of M.E. *-ĕr*, the type represented by the spelling in above forms, see § 228.

NOTE. The [*ar*] type of original *er*-words was very usual in eighteenth-century Received Standard. Lady Wentworth regularly writes *sarve*, *sarvents*, *Jarmany*, *sartainly*, *hard* 'heard', *parson* 'person', etc., etc. Cp. *Wentw. Papers*, passim. *Vardy* 'verdict, opinion', occurs in Swift's *Polite Conversations*.

§ 223. M.E. wă-, quă-.

These combinations appear in present-day English with a rounded vowel: *wash*, *wan*, *swallow*, *swan*, *watch*, *wasp*, *quality*, *quantity*, *squash*, etc. [wɔʃ, wɔn, swɔloᵘ, swɔn, wɔtʃ, kwɔntɨti, wɔsp, kwɔliti, skwɔʃ], etc. The early Grammarians do not describe a rounded vowel here until 1685, but the evidence of occasional spellings shows that the rounding had taken place more than a century earlier. Thus Diehl, p. 14, cites *wosse* 'wash' (1560), and Zachrisson, p. 62, gives *reword*, *Wolsyngham*, *Voluntyne*, *wos*, etc. = '*reward*, *Walsingham*, *Valentine*, *was*', from the Paston Letters. The form *swolwe-bridde* occurs already in the Earliest Engl. Prose Psalter (circa 1350), Psalmus Ezeech., verse 7, p. 180.

There seem to have been two periods of this rounding in different speech communities, one before, and one after the fronting of old *ă*. Thus the above early spellings seem to show that L. M.E. *wa* became *wo* direct. On the other hand, the Grammarians give forms like [wæz, swæn, kwæliti], which show that *w* did not hinder the fronting, and that [wa] did become [wæ]. In this case, the series must have been [swăn, swæn, swăn, swɔn], etc.

In the dialect of some classes, the rounding did not involve all words, for [kwæliti, kwæntiti] were well-used eighteenth-century forms, and have been heard in the last century by old people still living.

The form *swam* [swæm] instead of [swɒm] may be explained from the analogy of *ran*, *began*, etc.

Before back consonants the rounding did not as a rule take place among standard speakers; cp. *wag*, *quack*, *wax*, etc. On the other hand, [kwɒg] instead of [kwæg] in *quagmire* may be occasionally heard.

§ **224.** When *r* follows, whether as a final sound, or succeeded by another consonant, the rounded vowel just described is lengthened, and appears now as [ɔ̄], thus *war*, *warm*, *warp*, *warn*, *swarm*, etc. = [wɔ̄, wɔ̄m, wɔ̄p, wɔ̄n, swɔ̄m]. The history of *ăr*, § 222 above, shows that this lengthening is due to the *r* itself, and not to the modern loss of this sound.

The lengthening did not take place when the *r* was followed by a vowel — *warrior*, *warren*, *quarrel* = [wŏriə, wŏrin, kwŏrəl].

It may be noted that certain groups of young speakers at the present time show a tendency to lose intervocalic *-r-*, and in this case, the preceding vowel *does* appear to be lengthened; either [wɔ̄jə, kwɔ̄əl], etc., or [wɔ̄jə, kwɔ̄əl].

M.E. ā.

§ **225. Independent Development.**

ā fronted to [ǣ] which is raised to [ɛ̄] and then made tense: [ē].

In spite of the fact that Gill (1621) asserts that he pronounced the old sound [*ā*] in *name* and *capon*, and ridicules the pronunciation [nēm, kēpn], no one now takes him quite seriously. He at least recognizes the existence of a fronted pronunciation while he condemns it. His own pronunciation may have been [ǣ] (cp. Zachrisson, p. 190).

As a matter of fact, a front vowel in the place of M.E. *ā* is recognized by French writers as early as 1528, and occasional spellings from written documents, such as *tēke* 'take', *fēder*, M.E. *fāder* (Paston Letters), *cēme* 'came' (Cely Papers), etc., etc., show that the fronting (probably to [ǣ]) was as early as the fifteenth century (Zachrisson, p. 56).

Probably the [ɛ̄] stage was reached early in the sixteenth century, and [ē] by the end of that century. There must have been some individual speakers, or perhaps social classes, who were somewhat behind the latest developments, as Gill's remarks show. See also Luick, *Anglia*, xiv, p. 271. The fronting of *ā* was considerably ahead of that of *ă*, according to the testimony of the Grammarians. See § 217.

Examples are: *ale*, *dame*, *cape*, *flake*, *gate*, *lane*, *behave*, etc., etc.

The words *danger*, *grange*, *safe* (§§ 171 (9), Note, 184, Note, 196), in so far as they go back to M.E. *ā* and not to *ai*, belong to this group.

The present-day diphthong [e*i*] in [ne*i*m], etc., is nineteenth century.

NOTE. The provincial [re*i*ðər, fe*i*ðər] are from M.E. *rāðer*, *fāðer*. This type is probably indicated by Lady Wentworth's spelling *rether* (1708). Cf. *Wentw. Papers*, p. 64. *Have* [hæv], as distinct from [bi'he*i*v], goes back to M.E. *hăv* with shortening, or absence of lengthening, in an unstressed position (§ 177). For [hæst, hæþ], see § 219, Note 2.

M.E. ā + r.

§ **226.** In the combination *ār*, M.E. *ā* developed, according to § 225, to [ǣ, ɛ̄] and remained at this stage. Then a parasitic [ə] developed between the vowel and the *-r*, and the latter was lost, in Standard English, early in nineteenth century.

Thus M.E. *hāre* 'hare' had the following series of changes: [hār < hær < hɛ̄r < hɛ̆ər < hɛə] and so with the words, *care*, *dare*, *bare*, *snare*, etc. It will be seen that in the [ɛ̄r] stage original *ār* was completely levelled under M.E. *ĕ²r* (§ 233), and M.E. *air*, *eir* (§ 269).

M.E. ĕ.

§ **227. Independent Treatment.**

M.E. *ĕ* remains as [ɛ]: *set*, *read* (Pret. M.E. *rĕdde*), *men*, *tell*, *well* (adv.), *kept*, *get*, *help*, etc., etc.

The vowel in *fledge*, *left* (hand), *knell* is M.E. and O.E. *ĕ* from earlier *ў*, according to the 'Kentish' type. See §§ 142, 158 (*b*).

M.E. ĕr-.

§ **228. Combinative Treatment.**

In so far as this combination did not become *ăr* in M.E., it remained till the Early Mod. period, and was then apparently made into a flat vowel [ə]. With the weakening of the [r], this vowel was lengthened, and lowered, and made tense, becoming present-day [ɚ]. Examples: *earth*, *earn*, *churl*, *heard* (Late M.E. *hĕrde*), *fern*, *learn*, *servant*, etc.

The vowel in *kernel* is the 'Kentish' form of O.E. *ў*, W.S., etc., *cyrnel* (§ 142).

Herd, in shep*herd*, *herds*man, etc., is from the O.E. Merc. *heorde*, M.E. *heorde*, *herde*, W.S. *hierde* (§§ 117, 119, 139).

In sixteenth-century literary English the type *yearth* 'earth' is much used, e.g. in Edw. VI's First Prayer Book. This is probably from the M.E. Kentish type *yerþe* as found in Aȝenbite (§ 168).

Clerk, *Berks.*, etc., whose spelling shows that they represent

M.E. *ĕr*, are yet pronounced according to the M.E. *ăr*-type (§ 222).

For other sources of [ɝ] see §§ 238, 252, 255.

NOTE. When a vowel follows *-er-* [ɛ] remains: *verity*, etc.

M.E. ē¹ (tense; see sources under § 201).

§ 229. Independent Development [ē < ī].

Old tense *ē* was raised to [ī] at least by the end of the first third of the sixteenth century. This is proved by the statements of the Grammarians. There is no conclusive evidence for this earlier, either from occasional spellings or otherwise. Caxton's *hyre* 'hear' may be an exception to this, but cp. § 211. This [ī] has so far remained in Standard English. Examples of the various groups are: *seek*, *sweet*, *feet*, *green*; *believe*, *steel*, *steeple*; *he*, *we*, *me*; *shield*, *wield*, *field*; *deed*, *seed*; *freeze*, *bee*, *deep*, *see*; *beetle*, *evil*, *weevil*. Norman-French words: *beef*, *chief*, *grief*, *piece*.

NOTE 1. *Evil*, O.E. (W.S.) *yfel*, was formerly explained as a Kentish form, but as Luick has pointed out (*Untersuchungen*, p. 281), M.E. *ē* lengthened from *ĕ* in an open syllable was slack, whereas the tenseness of *ē* in the ancestor of *evil* is proved by the sixteenth-century Grammarians recording this word with [ī]. It must therefore be explained together with *beetle* and *weevil*, according to § 174.

NOTE 2. The fact that *deed* is recorded as containing [ī] already in the sixteenth century, as well as the spelling of this word, and of *seed*, shows that these forms are derived from the non-W.S. *dēd*, etc., which of course had [ē] in M.E. Chaucer often uses the Anglian forms of these words in his rhymes, but has a preponderance of rhymes with undoubted M.E. [ē] (§§ 162, 371).

§ 230. M.E. ē¹ before -r.

Before *-r* a parasitic vowel developed after M.E. *ē*, Mod. [ī]: *here*, *hear*, *dear*, etc. = [hɪə, dɪə]. The diphthong [ɪə] is heard at the present time, both when final *r* is lost as in the above words, and when it has been retained before a vowel as in [hɪərɪŋ], etc.

NOTE. *Hear* from Anglian *hēran*, § 124; *fear* from Anglian *fēr*, § 124; and *year* from Anglian *gēr*, § 123 (but cp. § 115, Note), are all normal in having [iə]. For the [ɛə] in *there*, *were*, *hair*, cp. § 233.

§ 231. Shortening of Mod. [ī] from M.E. ē¹.

Shortening, comparable to that of [ɛ̄] (§ 235), has taken place in *breeches* [brɪtʃɪz], (hay)*rick*—[rīk] survives in the dialects—*riddle*, O.E. (Anglian) *rēdels*; *sick*, *silly*, etc.

M.E. ē² (slack [ē], § 201, p. 116).

§ 232. Independent Treatment.

This sound was kept quite distinct from M.E. [ē] far into the Modern period. On the spelling *ea*, see § 212. All our evidence points to the original sound being retained at least as a mid vowel throughout the sixteenth century. It may, however, have become [ẽ] in some circles before the end. Gill (1621) mentions with contempt the pronunciations [mīt, līv] which might imply either a tense and raised pronunciation of [ē], verging on [ī], or this actual sound itself. A man who said [mēt] and who did not use [ē] at all, might possibly mistake the latter for a high vowel. Towards the end of the century, the statements of the Grammarians point, in some cases, to [ī] in *weak*, *sea*, *meat*, etc., but this pronunciation was not general, nor indeed did it become universal till late in the eighteenth century, as is shown both by Grammarians' statements and poets' rhymes.

Among the words included under [ī] by some authorities in the eighteenth century are *break*, *great*, *steak*, where we still have the [ē] type. (For our present forms of these see note below.) It seems pretty certain that it is not a question, after the middle of the seventeenth century, of a new sound change from [ē] to [ī] but merely of a particular type of pronunciation (Class Dialect) becoming general. The mid vowel is retained to-day in most of the old [ē] words in Irish English, and in some words also in the dialects of the S.W. of England. Examples of words containing M.E. [ē] are: *beam*, *dream*, *beat*, *east*, *leap*; *clean*, *deal* (vb. and n.), *heat*, *heath*, *teach*; *breathe*, *eat*, *speak*, *steal*; French words: *beast*, *feast*, *veal*.

NOTE. Present-day [greɪt], M.E. *grēte*, may be due to a doublet in M.E. form on the analogy of the Comp. *grēttre*, which survived in Caxton's English. If this survived after [grēt] had become [grēt], a form [grēt], whence later [grēt], might arise again with the vowel *quality* of the Comp., but the *quantity* of the Positive. See Jespersen, p. 338, who, however, explains the form rather differently by his principle of 'preservative analogy'. *Steak* and *break* may owe their vowel to a S.W. dialect type, and this explanation would of course account for *great* also.

M.E. [ēr].

§ 233. It appears that in Standard English the vowel in this group did not normally undergo raising to [ī] as in the independent position, and as the group M.E. [ēr] did (§ 230).

Examples are: *bear* vb., and the name of the animal, *swear*, *wear*, *ere*. *There*, *where*, *were*, *hair* must contain M.E.

[ɛ̄] from O.E. (Saxon) type *ǣ*. Cp., on the other hand, *fear*, § 230, Note.

§ **234.** There is, however, another group of words which have [*iə*] at the present day, and where the pronunciation [īr] is recorded in Early Mod.: *ear*, *spear*, *rear* (vb.), *beard*, *shear*, *smear*, *tear* (from the eye). *Ear* may possibly owe its vowel to association with *hear*, but the others must come from a dialect where the change to [ir] was normal. It is to be noted that nearly all words of both groups occur both with [ēr] and with [īr] in the Grammarians.

NOTE. *Beard* = [bi̯əd] presupposes earlier [bīrd], but another pronunciation [bĕ̄rd], which develops into [bā̆rd], is also recorded. Walker states that this persisted on the stage in late eighteenth century, and it may still be heard in Ireland.

§ **235. Shortening of M.E. [ɛ̄] in Modern Period.**

In a number of words [ɛ̄] was shortened, apparently during the seventeenth century, before it was raised to [ī], perhaps before it had become tense. The conditions of this shortening are not satisfactorily explained (Jespersen, pp. 234 and 243). Examples are: *bread*, *breath*, *dead*, *death*, *head*, *lest*, *pleasure*, *re(a)d*, *sweat*, etc. Both long and short forms of these are to be found among the eighteenth-century writers on pronunciation.

Do these short forms represent the habits of a Class Dialect? Cf. the long forms *bead*, *knead*, etc. In the dialects long forms are often found where Standard has short and vice versa. Any one who has lived in Ireland knows that there we speak of a horse being able to [lɛ̄p] well = 'jump'.

With the shortening of [ɛ̄] compare that of [ē], § 231.

M.E. ō[1] (tense).—Independent Treatment.

§ **236. M.E. ō[1] (tense) becomes [ū].**

All careful poets in M.E. distinguish in their rhymes between tense and slack *ō*. The former, as we have seen (§ 263, Note), probably became [ū] as early as the fourteenth century in the dialects of the S.W. of England. We have no means of knowing exactly how early this change took place in Standard English, but the earliest sixteenth-century Grammarians all describe an [ū] sound in words which had tense *ō* in M.E., and such spellings as *must* (about 1400, Lond. Records, Horn, p. 89); *gud* (1419, Morsbach, *Schriftspr.*, p. 48), *gud*, *gowde* (frequently); *tuk* (Cely Papers, Süssbier, p. 43), etc., leave no doubt that the [ū] was established at least by the beginning of the fifteenth century. The spellings *gud*, *goude*,

stoud, etc., occur also in the Paston Letters (Zachrisson, p. 77), which show that the sound was pretty general. The process consisted in the gradual raising and over-rounding of *ō*, till the high position of the tongue, and full rounding were attained.

Caxton occasionally uses the symbol *ou* for old *ō*, and even in Edward VI's First Prayer Book such spellings as *stoud*, *floud* occur.

This L. M.E. [ū] has three possible developments in Standard English, which are seen in different groups of words.

(1) [ū] remains down to the present time: [mūn, spūn, rūd, sūn, tūþ, stūl, fūd, gūs, hūf], etc., etc.; *moon*, *spoon*, *rood*, *soon*, *tooth*, *stool*, *food*, *goose*, *hoof*.

(2) [ū] remains down to late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, and is then shortened and made slack: [gŭd, hŭd, sŭt, fŭt, kŭk, rŭk, lŭk, stŭd], etc., etc.; *good*, *hood*, *soot*, *foot*, *cook*, *rook*, *look*, *stood*.

(3) [ū] is shortened early in the sixteenth century, or perhaps before. The new [ŭ] is levelled under M.E. short *ŭ* and is unrounded in the late sixteenth century; see § 250. The sound resulting from this unrounding has produced present-day [a]. Words of this group are: [blad, flad, glav, dan, manþ, mast, maðə], etc., etc.; *blood*, *flood*, *glove*, *done*, *month*, *must* (vb.), *mother*.

§ **237.** The distribution of these three types is quite fixed now in **Received Standard**, but varies considerably among the various **Modified Standards**, and in the **Regional Dialects**. [sat] 'soot' is now a vulgarism.

In the Regional Dialects and the Modified Standard of the North Midlands [ū] is still heard in all words before *k*, [tūk, lūk], etc. The differences among the sixteenth-century Grammarians in the distribution of [ū] and [ŭ], and among the seventeenth-century ones, in that of [ū] and [u, a], may be partly due to differences of age, the pronunciation being further developed in some than in others, but it must also be due to influences of Class and Regional character, just as at the present day.

NOTE 1. If we accept Luick's interpretation of M.E. *wode* 'wood', *above*, *love*, § 174, we must assume Late M.E. [wūd, əbūv, lūv], and they will fall under § 236, group (2) with *hood*, etc., or under (3) with *blood*.

NOTE 2. M.E. *gōld*, with lengthening before *ld* (§ 114), normally became [gūld], and this was the fashionable Received Standard form well into the nineteenth century. By the side of M.E. *gōld*, however, *gŏld* also existed, due probably to the analogy of the adj. *gŏldene*, *gŏldne* (§§ 175

(7), 176), and this later became [gōld] long after the old long form had become [gūld]. (See § 242 for *ōl* + cons.) This late form has completely ousted the old [gūld], which survives, however, in the family name *Gould* by the side of *Gold*.

§ 238. Combinative Treatment of M.E. $\bar{o}^1$ + r.

In M.E. *flōr*, *swōr*, *mōr*, *pōre*, *hōre* 'floor', 'swore', 'moor', 'poor', 'whore'; in M.E. *dōre* 'door' (§ 174); in *bōrd* 'board', *hōrd* (§ 114), etc., *ō* was not raised to [ū], but seems to have become [ō] in part of Early Standard. Some early writers, however, have [mūr, pūr, būrd], etc. At the present time both types survive among different speakers, in some words. Thus [puə, pō, muə, mō]. As a rule, in Received Standard, apart from *poor*, *moor*, *boor*, only [ō] obtains in words containing M.E. *ōr*. In the dialects, however, we may hear [būərd, flūər, hūər], etc.

(Cp. Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, p. 461, who assumes the series [ōr, ūr, ōr, ōr].)

Mutschmann, *Beibl. z. Anglia*, June, 1908, suggests the influence of the preceding lip-consonants to account for [puə, muə, buə, muən].

§ 239. *Word*, *worthy*, which now have [ā], may have had $\bar{o}^1$ in M.E. In this case, they had [ū] in Early Mod., a view supported by such spellings as *woord*, *woorthie* in *Edw. VI First P. B.* The development from Early Mod. would be [wūrd, wŭrd, ward, wă̆rd, wād], etc.

M.E. $\bar{o}^2$ (slack).

§ 240. Independent Development.

M.E. $\bar{o}^2$, whatever its origin (§ 201, p. 117), was probably a long mid-back-slack-round [ō̜]. This sound seems to have remained until well into the sixteenth century and then to have been made tense [ō]. The latter sound was diphthongized to the present [ou].

Examples: *stone*, *bone*, *loaf*, *only*, al-*one*, etc.; *hope*, *throat*; *coat*, *rose*, *pole*.

NOTE 1. *Broad* [brɔd] instead of [broud], and *groat*, now [grout] from the spelling, but formerly [grɔt, grōt] have been explained as derived from a dialectal type in the S.-West of England, where this development is normal. Sweet's explanation (*H. E. S.*, § 841) that the lowering is due to the influence of *r* can hardly hold good in the face of *grove*, *grope*; see Horn, *Hist. ne. Gr.*, p. 84.

NOTE 2. Present-day *one* [wan] shows a different vowel development from *on*-ly, al-*one*, which have a normal sound from O.E. *ān*, M.E. *ōn*. [wan] seems to presuppose an earlier [wun], like [wats] 'oats', earlier [wuts], now dialectal or vulgar. So many widely separated dialects now

have [úəts, wats ; úən, wan] that it is difficult to decide from which area this type passed into Standard English. The spelling *wonlyche* occurs as early as 1421 (*St. Editha*, 3529). A few scattered examples of this spelling are found in the sixteenth century: *Such a wone* (Latimer's Sermons, 1549). *Whome* 'home' is used by Tyndale (1528), and *whoale* 'whole', *wholy* for *holy*, forms similar to *wone* occur, the latter several times, in *Rede me and be not wrothe* (1528); *wholy* in Sir T. More, by side of *holy* and *hole*. Several of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Grammarians recognize [wun, wan], etc., and as late as 1695 the *Writing Scholar's Companion* notes [wun] as vulgar (Horn, *Hist. ne. Gr.*, p. 83). It seems evident from the spelling that in Early Standard *one* had the same vowel as *on*-ly, *al*-one, etc., and that the other type gradually got a footing later from a lower Class Dialect. It is suggested by some that old [ōn] survives in *'un—a good 'un, a wrong 'un*, etc.; but this may equally well represent [wan] with loss of initial [w] in an unstressed syllable.

The process was [ōn-, ó́ən-, ōən, úən-, uán, wan] or something of the sort.

NOTE 3. A similar tendency to develop [w] may be noted before old tense *ō* which had become [ū]. The spelling *wother* 'other' occurs on p. 117 of the *Shillingford Letters* (1447–50, Camden Soc., 1871).

Combinative Treatment of M.E. $\bar{o}^2$.

§ 241. M.E. $\bar{o}^2$ + r.

Before *r* M.E. slack *ō* seems to have become tense, as elsewhere, and then to have been made slack again, and lowered to [ɔ̄]: *roar*, *boar*, *born*, for*lorn*, *glory*, *hoarse*, *sore*, etc. All these from earlier [rōr, bōr, glōri], etc. The tense [ō] or sometimes [ōə, o*u*ə] still survives in the Northern and North Midland Dialects, and is heard also in the various forms of Vulgar Modified Standard in Liverpool.

§ 242. M.E. $\bar{o}^2$ + l.

It seems certain from the statements of the Grammarians, and from occasional spellings, some of which survived pretty late, that in the above combination a parasitic [u] developed, at least as early as the late fifteenth century—*owld*, *could*, etc., 'old, cold,' etc. This diphthong was subsequently contracted to [ō] and had the same history as independent $\bar{o}^2$ (§ 240).

§ 243. Shortening of M.E. $\bar{o}^2$.

This occurs in *hot*, O.E. *hāt*, M.E. *hōt*, E. Mod. spelt *hoate* [hɔ̄t] by side of *hotte*; cp. the similar shortening of M.E. $\bar{e}^1$ and $\bar{e}^2$, §§ 231, 235.

M.E. ŏ.

§ 244. Independent Treatment.

M.E. *ŏ* remains unaltered, so far as we can tell, far into the Modern Period. It was probably *mid-back-slack-round* [ŏ]. It cannot be determined precisely when it was lowered to its present sound [ɔ̆]. Examples: *cot*, *rot*, *ox*, *long*, etc., etc.

NOTE. In many Dialects, M.E. *ŏ* shows unrounded forms in [*ā, ă*] in a large number of words at the present time (cf. Wright, *E. D. Gr.*, §§ 82–4, 87). This tendency evidently penetrated into Standard English during the seventeenth century (cp. Marston's rhyme of *daughter* [dâftər] with *after*, § 264, and was current, to some extent, in fashionable circles, as we see from Lord Foppington's (Vanbrugh's *Relapse*) *stap* 'stop', *Tam* 'Tom', *Gad* 'God', *pasitively* 'positively', *harse* 'horse', *plats* 'plots', *bax* 'box', etc., etc. Lady Wentworth's *Anslow* for *Onslow* (1708) (cp. *Wentw. Papers*, p. 67), and *beyand* (1710) (ibid., p. 127) are examples of the same habit. Some few forms of this class survive: *strap* and *strop*, *Gad*, *Egad*. The unrounding apparently took place before the fronting of [*a*], or [æ] in these words may be due to sound substitution, at a time when [*a*] no longer existed in Standard English.

§ **245. Lengthening of ŏ.**

Before [s, f, þ] M.E. *ŏ* appears in Present-day English, though not among all speakers, as [ō] as in *cost*, *soft*, *froth*. This is due probably to a late lengthening. Cp. the parallel lengthening of [æ], § 219.

M.E. ū.

§ **246. Independent Treatment**: *ū* becomes [*au*].

We have no precise knowledge from direct sources of the approximate date of the beginnings of this diphthongization. O.E. *ū*, as we know (§ 152), was commonly written *ou* in M.E., and this spelling remained long after the sound had changed, indeed it is the regular spelling at the present time in the old *ū*-words. The occasional *au*, *aw* spellings of the late fifteenth century, such as *cawe* 'cow' (*Paston Letters*; Zachrisson, p. 79), no doubt indicate a diphthong, but not necessarily [*au*]. We have seen (§§ 163, Note, and 236) that the old tense *ō* had become [ū], probably in the fourteenth century, in the S. West, and it is evident that old [ū] must have moved on to something else before this new [ū] arose, otherwise the two sounds would have been levelled under a single sound. This would put the beginnings of diphthongization very far back for the S.W. dialects, but it does not follow that this occurred everywhere at the same time. At any rate, all the sixteenth-century Grammarians describe a diphthong, apparently [*ou*], in the old *ū*-words. The process was similar in nature to that whereby old [ī] became a diphthong; that is, the long vowel was broken up into two parts, and further differentiated. [ū], then, first became [u^{u}] and then the first element was lowered, giving [*ou*], and this again was unrounded to [au]. This appears to be the stage reached in the seventeenth century. The present diphthong generally has a low-flat vowel in the first element.

Examples are: *how*, *house*, *mouse*, *bow* (vb.), *mouth*, *foul*, *ground*, *plough*; *crown*, *power*, *flower*, *count*, etc. *Drought* (dr*au*t) is from M.E. *drŭht* < *drū*(*h*)*t*.

NOTE 1. In *country*, *plum*, *rough*, *southern*, *thumb*, *ū* was shortened to *ŭ* before the diphthongization began, and the vowel shares the history of other M.E. *ŭ*-words (§§ 236 (3), 250).

NOTE 2. *Youth* [jūþ] may be a Northern loan (*ū* remains in the North), or it might owe its vowel to association with a short M.E. *young* (jŭŋg], giving an early [jŭþ], which later underwent lengthening. Cp. similar lengthenings in §§ 219, 245. It is possible there may have been an O.E. mutated **ğÿğþ*, since [jȳþ] seems to have existed in Early Mod. (Luick, *Anglia*, xiv, p. 291, cit. Horn, p. 92). *Uncouth* [ankūþ] must be a Northern form.

NOTE 3. Modern [kjūkambə] is a spelling pronunciation for *cu-* from earlier [kū-], which gives normally [k*au*kambə], now obsolete or vulgar.

Combinative Treatment.

§ 247. M.E. ū before r + consonant is not diphthongized.

Examples: *court*, *source*, *course*, etc. [ū] is still recorded in these words in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the eighteenth century the vowel was lowered to [ō], whence by further lowering we get the present [ɔ̄] in these words (Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, pp. 455–61; cp. also remarks in § 241 above on the slackening of [ō] in eighteenth century).

§ 248. M.E. ū before lip-consonants, not diphthongized.

In this position the sound of M.E. *ū* remained unaltered. (See Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, p. 501.)

Examples: *droop*, *loop*, *stoop*, *room*, *tomb*, *Cowper* [kūpə], etc.

§ 249. M.E. wū- remains.

The vowel in *wound* (subst.), to *wound*, M.E. *wūnd*, *wūnd*(*en*), has been preserved owing to the influence of *w-*. The pronunciation [w*au*nd], which formerly existed, is probably influenced by the spelling. The pret. of to *wind* is still [w*au*nd], and this may be explained by the analogy of *found*, which belongs to the same class.

M.E. and Early Modern ŭ.

§ 250. Independent Treatment: ŭ becomes [a].

The earliest English Grammarians, hide-bound as they are by the spelling, leave it doubtful whether they are aware of any other sound than [ŭ] in words *buck*, *cut*, *but*, etc. Most of them down to the middle of the seventeenth century are evidently describing the old [ŭ] pure and simple. Hodges, in 1644, is the first English writer to make it clear that the new sound is in use, and that most old short *ŭ*-words have this sound in his pronunciation (Zachrisson, p. 211). On the

other hand, the Frenchman Bellot in 1580, while stating that *Buck* and *Book* are both pronounced with French *ou* (= [ŭ]), says that the sound of French *o* is heard in the first syllable of *upon* (Spira, *Englische Lautentwickelung*, p. 52). Mason (a French merchant), 1622, says that French *o* is heard in *upon* and *hungrie* (Spira, p. 67). A work called *Alphabet anglois*, 1625, describes *o* as occurring in *up*, *butter*, *sunder*, *curse*, etc. This identification of the sound of English *u* with French *o* is significant when we remember such Modern French spellings and pronunciations as that of *tôb*, English *tub*. Zachrisson, p. 81, thinks that in such sixteenth-century spellings as *farniture* = *furniture* (cf. Diehl, pp. 154, 158), *a* must be interpreted as an attempt to render the new sound, and even mentions, though with hesitation, *gannes* 'guns' from *Paston Letters*, as pointing to the existence of the sound in the fifteenth century. Without relying too much on this rather slender evidence, we shall probably be right in asserting that [ŭ] was altered from its original sound well before the end of the sixteenth century, though the new pronunciation did not yet affect all words with old short *ŭ*, nor did it occur among all speakers, even of Standard English. As to the process itself, if we take the Frenchmen's evidence literally, we shall conceive that [ŭ] high-back-tense-round was first lowered, with rather more than sufficient unrounding for a mid vowel, and then completely unrounded. The Lancashire vowel in *bush*, *bull*, etc., which is mid-back-tense, slightly rounded, might easily sound as a kind of [ŏ] to unaccustomed ears, and it may well represent the stage reached by the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and lasting beyond the first quarter of the century following.

This unrounding process involved all the words containing [ŭ] no matter what the origin, the main groups being: (*a*) O.E. and M.E. *ŭ* as in *run*, *cut*, *bud*, *honey*, *nut*, *rust*, *son*, *summer*, *won*, *wonder*, etc., etc. [ran, kat, bad, hani, nat], etc.; (*b*) O.E. and M.E. *ō*, Early Mod. [ū] with early shortening, as in *blood*, *flood*, etc. [blad, flad], cp. § 236. 3; (*c*) words with Early Mod. *u* from earlier [y], as in *cudgel*, *drudge*, *rush*, etc. [kadžəl, dradž, raʃ]. (See § 253, M.E. *ü*, for the sound in this group of words.)

Combinative Treatment of M.E. ŭ.

§ 251. Influence of Initial Lip-consonant: [u] restored.

The sound in *put*, *bull*, *bush*, *full*, *pull*, *wolf*, *wool*, which goes back to earlier *ŭ*, was apparently unrounded to start

with, but later, the influence of the initial lip-consonant restored [ŭ]. It looks as if this tendency existed only among certain classes of speakers, and as if the above were survivals of their dialect, while on the other hand in *mud*, *bud*, *but*, *fun*, etc., we have forms from another type of speech, in which the later rounding did not take place.

NOTE. Modern *come* [kam] apparently represents M.E. *cumen* (often written *comen*) and not M.E. *cōmen* with lengthening of *ŭ* (§ 174), to judge by such spellings in E. Mod. as *cummeth*, etc., *Edw. VI's First P. B.*

§ 252. M.E. ŭ before r or r + consonant : becomes [a], which becomes [ɑ̄].

The vowel in *burn*, *cur*, *murder*, *purse*, *worm* became [a], giving [barn, kar, mardər, pars, warm], etc., as in Modern Scotch; as the [r] sound weakened the vowel was lengthened, and ultimately made into a flat vowel, fully lengthened, giving present-day [ɑ̄]. For other sources of this sound see §§ 228, 238, 255.

NOTE. When a vowel follows the combination *-ur-*, it becomes [a], and the [*r*] being retained, no lengthening or other change of the vowel occurs : *flourish*, *nourish*, *Surrey*, &c.= [flariʃ, nariʃ, sari], etc.

M.E. ŭ̆ = O.E. y̆ ; O.Fr. u.

§ 253. (See § 158 for O.E. *y̆* in M.E.)

The [*y̆*] sound, whether of English or French origin, was simply retracted to the corresponding high-back vowel [ŭ] (in Late M.E.?], and this sound underwent the subsequent lowering and unrounding which overtook the other [ŭ] sounds no matter what their origin, and developed into present-day [a]. See § 251.

Examples : (*a*) English words : *bundle*, *blush*, *thrush*, *much*, *such*, *drudge*, *clutch*, *cudgel*, *rush* (the plant) ; (*b*) French words : *just*, *judge*, *humble*, *study*, *public*.

NOTE 1. *Busy*, now [bizi] (§ 158 (a, e)), and *Bury* [bɛri] (vb. and n.] represent the M.E. *ü*-type in spelling, but the former shows the unrounded M.E. type, the latter the so-called Kentish type, in pronunciation. The survival in pronunciation of the old [y]-type in *bury* is recorded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The spelling *buiryed* (1710, *Wentw. Papers*, p. 122) almost certainly implies [bjūred]. (See also *E. St.* 47, pp. 165–6.)

NOTE 2. In a large number of words of English origin, O.E. *y̆* occurs in Standard Engl. with the M.E. *i*-type—*hill*, *wish*, *sin*, *fill*, *thin*, etc., and these words therefore fall under M.E. *i* (§ 255).

NOTE 3. In a certain number of words, the O. and M.E. 'Kentish' *e*-type survives in Standard Engl., e. g. *fledge*, *kernel*, *merry*, *knell*, &c. These, therefore, fall under M.E. *e* (§§ 227, 228).

NOTE 4. *Church*, O.E. *cyrċe*, *ċirċe*, is found in M.E. spelt with *u*, *i*, *e*. Its origin is, however, doubtful. The initial *ch-* cannot easily be accounted for if we assume original *y* (from *u-i*, § 108); the *e* and *u*-spellings are difficult, if we assume that the vowel was originally *i*.

§ 254. M.E. ī becomes [ai].

Under this sound we may include original O.E. *ī* in *write*, etc., French *ī*, and the *ī* which developed before [χ] in *light*, etc., probably in the late M.E. period in some dialects. [χ] seems to have lingered on into the seventeenth century among some speakers (§ 276). The preceding vowel may have been lengthened just before the total disappearance of the front consonant.

The diphthongizing process probably began by a slackening of the latter part of *ī*, thus [*ī* < *i*^{i}]. The first portion was then further differentiated to [e]. This mid-front vowel was then made into a flat vowel, and then retracted to [a], giving [ai]. When once the diphthongization starts, by the differentiation of the first and latter part of [*ī*] it is possible to suggest various paths of development, none of which can be proved beyond a doubt to be the one followed. The above series, however, seems to square with what is known. From [ai] the development to the present [*ai*] is simple and is merely a question of slackening.

There is little doubt that the [ei] stage was reached pretty early in the fifteenth century if the fairly frequent spelling *ey* in *St. Editha* (1421) means anything: *bleynd*, *myeld*, *feyr*, 'blind, mild, fire', etc. The beginnings may have been in the preceding century (Dibelius, *Anglia*, xxiii, pp. 349, 352). The question as to what the precise stages were, and when they were reached, is very difficult. See on these points Zachrisson, pp. 73–6. The development was not uniform all over the country. Some of the sixteenth-century English Grammarians still insist on a pronunciation [*ī*], but this is probably due to the domination of the spelling (Zachrisson, p. 205). It seems probable that the [*ai*] stage was reached by the end of the sixteenth century. At this point old [*ī*] is levelled under *oi*. The rhyme *tryall—disloyal* occurs in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, iv (1613). Cp. also the spelling *voiolence*, *Wentw. Papers*, p. 280 (1712). [See § 270 for the history of this diphthong.) Many dialects still remain approximately at this stage, the best known being Irish English, whose sound is usually rendered *oi* by popular writers of to-day.

Examples of present-day [*ai*] from earlier [ī] are: *life*, *ride*, *my*, *I*, *bite*, *blind*, etc., *knight*, *night*, *light*, etc. *Eye*, *high*, *nigh* of course go back to M.E. *ī*-forms, for which see § 171 (*b*).

NOTE. The pronunciation [ŏblīdž] was usual in the eighteenth century, as is shown by definite statements and poets' rhymes, e. g. Pope's:

> Fearing e'en fools, by flatterers *besieged*,
> And so obliging, that he ne'er *obliged*.

This was a fashionable pronunciation due to French influence. It went out, however, apparently, in the best society, before the end of the century, owing, it is said, to Lord Chesterfield's strictures. It survived, however, in some circles until quite lately, Wilkie Collins, it is said, being the last to use this form (Jespersen, p. 240).

[ī] is preserved in words of late French origin, *machine*, *invalid*, etc. In unstressed positions [ĭ] or [ə] is normal, the shortening being far earlier than the diphthongization, e. g. *housewife* = [hazĭf], *Berkshire* = [bȧkʃə], the artificial [-ʃaiə] in the names of counties being due to the spelling or the influence of the stressed *shire*. Walker (1801) recommends [mī] in unstressed positions, but the strong [mai] is largely used now in such phrases as [aiv lōst mai weĭ], etc. The otherwise obsolete [mĭn] may sometimes be heard on the stage—I have heard Mr. Benson say [ou mĭ profɛtĭk soul, mĭ naŋkl].

M.E. ĭ.

§ 255. Independent Treatment.

This sound remains unchanged, so far as can be discovered: *bid*, *spring*, *sit*, *ship*, *dish*, etc., etc.

Ridge, *bridge*, *thin*, *hill*, *midge*, *fist*, etc., are from the M.E. *ĭ*-type from O.E. *ў* (§ 158 (*a*) and (*e*), 253 (Note 2)). This form is typical of the London dialect from the fourteenth century at least.

NOTE. *Chill*, O.E. (W.S.) *ċielu*, is one of the few words of definitely W. Sax. type in Mod. Standard English. The non-W.S. form was O.E. *ċelu*, M.E. *chēle*, which would have given Mod. **cheel* [tʃīl].

Combinative Treatment.

§ 256. i + r, or r + consonant.

In such words as *sir*, *bird*, *first*, etc., *i* seems to have been considerably modified, perhaps during sixteenth century. The first stage may have been a raising of the back of the tongue, thus giving a high-flat vowel. This then became a pure back vowel, through the abandonment of the front action of the tongue. The high-back thus produced was levelled under the same sound from old *ŭ* (§ 251) and became [ə]. [bard, farst], etc. survive in Scotch. In English, the vowel was gradually lengthened as [r] was weakened, and finally lowered to a low-flat vowel [ɚ]. See history of *ur* in § 252. The combination *ir* is therefore a fruitful source of Modern [ɚ]. See also §§ 228, 239, and 252.

§ **257.** When *-ir-* is followed by a vowel, it remains unaltered: *spirit, stirrup, squirrel*, etc.

§ **258.** The *i* in *England* [iŋgləɴd], *singe, hinge, wing* is M.E. *i* from earlier *e*, before [ŋ, ndž].

M.E. and Early Modern au.

§ **259.** **Independent development**—[*a*u] < [ɔ̄].

This diphthong occurred in a large number of words in M.E. (cp. § 171 (8)), and their number was still further increased in Early Modern by the development of *al* to [*au*l] (cp. § 218).

The early Grammarians (sixteenth century) describe a diphthong as still existing in words spelt with *au* and *aw*, but already in the fifteenth century (Cely Papers) such a spelling as *awffer* 'offer' (Zachrisson, p. 82) seems to show that the old *au* had been monophthongized to [ɔ̄]. We cannot always trust our Grammarians to distinguish a real diphthong, but if such still existed for old *au* in the sixteenth century or later, it was probably [ɔu]. The changes from [*au*] to the present [ɔ̄] were probably [*au*—o*u*—ɔ*u*—ɔ̄], that is to say the first element was first rounded and lowered, and then the second element was weakened and finally lost, the first become long and tense. The present sound was probably reached early in the seventeenth century.

Examples of M.E. *au*, present-day [ɔ̄], are: *claw, draw, law, hawk*; *naught, slaughter, taught*; *cause, fault*; fifteenth century *au* (§ 218) occurred in *call, malt, chalk*, etc., etc. (On the loss of *l* in *chalk*, etc., cp. § 278.)

Further, from M.E. *aũn* in French words we have *daunt, haunt, launch, laundress, taunt*, etc., in so far as these have the pronunciation [dɔ̄nt], etc.

NOTE. As regards the pronunciation [ā] which exists also in these words, as well as exclusively in *aunt*, the least unsatisfactory explanation seems to be that it goes back to a M.E. variant with *ă*. The same applies to *branch, chance, dance, chant, grant*, etc., whose vowel interchanges with [æ]. The difficulty is to account for the lengthening to eighteenth-century [ǣ] in [ǣnt], etc., which form is a necessary precursor of the present one. *Branch*, etc., have [ɔ̄] forms recorded by the early writers, and these also exist in the Mod. Dialects.

Combinative treatment of au.

NOTE. The following account of the combinative treatment of *au* in Mod. Engl. follows the ingenious and plausible article of Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, pp. 462-97. These views are very widely accepted, and appear to settle many difficulties. On the other hand, they raise others. The whole question cannot be regarded as finally settled.

§ 260. au before lip-consonants becomes [*ā*].

The words *calf*, *calve*, *half*, *halve*, *balm*, *salve*, *laugh*, etc., are shown both by occasional early spellings, and by the accounts of Grammarians, to have had *au* at one time (cf. § 218). They now have [*ā*] in Standard English. It is suggested that shortly after *al* in these words became [*aul*], the *u* was lost before the following lip-consonant, and the *ă* underwent compensatory lengthening to [*ā*]. This *ā* was then fronted to [*ǟ*] at the same time that short [*ă*] was fronted. This [*ǟ*] then became [*ā*] again in the late eighteenth century. Thus the career of the vowel in *calf* was, after a certain point, identical with that in *chaff*, thus:

[tʃăf—tʃæf—tʃǟf—tʃāf
kau(l)f—kāf—kǟf—kāf]

and so on with the other words of this group. Luick admits that the [kāf] stage, which he has to assume for Early Modern, is not vouched for by any of the writers. He assumes that this development took place in the speech of the lower orders which did not come within the Grammarians' province.

As regards *laugh*, *laughter*, *draught*, where the *au* developed in M.E. before a back consonant which subsequently became *f* (§ 275), Luick assumes the series [lauχʷ < lauf < lāf < lǟf < lāf], etc.

NOTE. The disappearance of the *u* in *laugh* depends upon the development of the old [χʷ] into [f]. In dialects where [χ] remained, the diphthong also remained and became [ɔ̄]; cp. [lɔ̄h] in Scotch. Luick rightly says, p. 496, that there were two different developments in M.E., which led, one to [f], the other to [χ].

The starting-point is a back open cons. [χ] with lip-modification. In one type of speech the lip element is increased and the back weakened, and this ultimately results in [f] as in [lāftə]. In the other, the lip element is weak and the back element strong, and no [f] arises, but [χ] remains, and is subsequently lost as in [slɔ̄tə]. The weak point in Luick's scheme, it seems to me, is the assumption of the form [lauf] at all. There is, so far as I know, no evidence that it ever existed. [lauχ], which gave [lɔ̄χ], we are certain of. It seems much simpler to assume that the type which developed [f] was never diphthongized at all, but passed from [lăχʷ] to [lăf] in E. Modern. Cp. the 1563 spelling *laffe* cit. § 221. If we take the two words *slaughter* and *laughter* we can compare and contrast the development [slăχter < slauχter < slouχter < sloutər < slɔutər < slɔ̄tər; lăχʷtər < lăftər < læftər < lǟftər < lāftər]. Luick's scheme necessitates [lăχʷtər < lauχʷtər < lāuftər < lāftər < lǟftər], etc. It is ingenious, but assumes too much, besides being, as it appears, unnecessary. Again, as regards the suggested history of present-day [kāf], it is not proved that diphthongization before *l* was universal. Luick's theory assumes that the form [kaulf], whence [kauf], arose only to be monophthongized the next moment to the dubious early [kāf]. The evidence of the Modern Dialects,

among which [ǣ, ā, ɔ̄] forms are found for all the *-al-* words, seems to point to there being two types in E. Mod.—[*ăl*-], which became [ā(l)], and [*a*ul], which became [ɔ̄(l)].

§ **261.** Present-day *safe*, *save*, *chamber* [seif, seiv, tʃeimbə] presuppose a M.E. *ā* (§ 225). Although these words occur with *au* in M.E., they are also found written *saaf*, etc. (§ 196). This monophthongization of an earlier *au* is due to the following lip-consonant, and took place, in some dialects, as early as the thirteenth century (Luick, *Anglia*, xvi. 503).

§ **262. au before [dž, ndž].**

Before these sounds, *au* loses the second element and becomes *ā*, whence Present-day [ei]: *gage* or *gauge*, M.E. *gage* and *gauge*, *danger* earlier *daunger*, *angel* earlier *aunge(l)*, *strange* earlier *straunge*, *change* earlier *chaunge*, etc.

We have seen (§ 185) that in M.E. *an* and *aun* spellings both occur in these and other French words, and also that there is M.E. evidence for *ā* in such words. This will account for the present pronunciation. We assume therefore M.E. *straunge* < *strānge*, etc.

§ **263.** Another tendency in M.E. (§ 171, final Note) is the diphthongization of *a* to *ai* before [dž, tʃ, ʃ], and the sixteenth-century Grammarians give some evidence of the existence of this. It is therefore possible to explain *danger*, etc., either from M.E. *daunger* < *dānger*, or from M.E. *dainger*.

See on these points Luick, *Anglia*, xvi. 485.

§ **264. M.E. ou.**

This diphthong went through the stages [*ou*, ɔ̄ᵘ, ɔ̄] and was therefore levelled under old *au* (§ 259). Examples: *daughter*, *brought*, *sought*, *wrought*, M.E. *douhter*, *brouhte*, etc.

NOTE. Undiphthongized forms, in which old [χ] had become [f], are also recorded in Standard Engl. as late as eighteenth century—[brŏft, dŏftər] (cp. Horn, *Hist. ne. Gr.*, p. 195), and such pronunciations survive in the Mod. Dialects (cp. Wright, *E. D. Gr.*, § 359). In Early Standard the two types must have coexisted—*douhter*, *dofter*, and the former won the place. The rhyme *after*—*daughter* [dɑftər] occurs in Marston's *Eastward Hoe*, v. 1 (1605). On the unrounding of M.E. *ŏ* cp. § 244, Note.

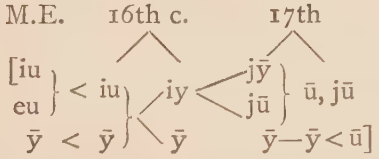
§ **265. M.E. ēu, īu, ü [ēu, īu, ȳ].**

There are several classes of words included here, some of native English, some of N. French origin: *Tuesday*, *steward*, *true*, *knew*, *brew*; *rule*, *Jew*; *due*, *sure*; *rude*, *use*, *pure*, *Luke*;

fruit, *suit*, *pew*, *tune*, etc., etc. It is quite simple to state that all these words, whether they had [ēu, īu, *or* ȳ] in M.E., now have either [jū], as [nyū, djū], etc., or [ū] after [r, dž, tʃ] and sometimes after [l], as [brū, rūl, tʃū, džū, lūk], etc.

The difficulty begins when we ask, what were the intervening stages, and at what point the old diphthongs were levelled under old [ȳ]. Opinions are not agreed at all on this point, and authorities differ as to the meaning of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Grammarians' statements. Thus Ellis, *E.E.P.*; Sweet, *H.E.S.*, pp. 247–56; Luick, *Anglia*, xiv, p. 287; Viëtor, *Sh. Pr.*, pp. 28–34; Horn, *Hist. ne. Gr.*, pp. 102, etc., all believe that [ȳ] existed in Early Modern, at least among some speakers. It is indeed difficult to deny, that a large number of Grammarians, both English and foreign, definitely describe this vowel, side by side, in some words, with [iu]. If the Grammarians cannot be trusted on this subject, in spite of the most categorical statements, confused and unsatisfactory though these often are, we may ask how they can be trusted at all, and whether the whole edifice of theory based upon their remarks does not crumble.

At the same time it must be admitted that there appear to be inconsistencies and contradictions in their accounts of the sound of the above words. Yet these do not disappear if we assume with Jespersen, *Hart's Pron.*, pp. 44–59; *N.E. Gr.*, pp. 102–5, or with Zachrisson, pp. 217–20, that the sound they intended to describe was in all cases [iu]. The following is a possible series of changes undergone by these sounds:



NOTE. I interpret the statements of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Grammarians to mean (1) that [ȳ] certainly existed, and (2) that it was pronounced by some speakers as [ȳ] alone, but by others was pronounced as a diphthong [iy]. The next development of these types was to [ǔ] and [jǔ] respectively.

§ 266. M.E. [ēu].

This diphthong was levelled under old [ēu], and like this, developed to [jū]. It seems probable that this levelling took place after [ȳ, ēu] had passed the [iȳ, jȳ] stage.

Examples: *dew* < M.E. *dēu*, O.E. *dēaw*; *few*, M.E. *fēwe*, O.E. *fēaw*.

§ 267. **M.E. ü [ȳ] in Native English Words.**

The only word in which the M.E. rounded type survives is *bruise*, and it is disputed whether this really represents O.E. *brȳsan*, or rather an Old French *bruiser*. *Build* preserves in its spelling the old *ü*-type from O.E. *bȳldan*, but not in pronunciation; the pronunciation [byld] is, however, recorded in the seventeenth century.

We have seen that O.E. *ȳ* became *ē* in the O.E. period in Kent and part of the E. Midland (§ 158 (*b*)). This O. and M.E. *ē* regularly becomes [*ī*]; see § 229 (*b*).

In an area of the North, and E. Midl., O.E. *ȳ* was unrounded to [i] in Early M.E.; see § 158 (*a*). This type is found in *bride*, *fire*, *hide*, *mice*, *lice*, *kine*, M.E. *brīd*, *fīr*, *hīden*, *mīs*, *līs*, *kīne*, O.E. *brȳd*, etc. They have the normal development of M.E. ī (§ 254).

NOTE. The so-called Kentish type, with Mod. [ī] from O.E. *ē*, earlier *ȳ*, occurs in some Modern Dialects [mīs, līs], etc., in Kt. and E. Midl. Similar forms in the South and S. West cannot, as sometimes stated, be so explained, but must be from M.E. unrounded forms *mīs*, *kīn* 'kine', etc., which were lowered to *kēn*, etc. in L. M.E. and then normally became [mīs, kīn], etc. in Mod. Engl. The West Country *-beere*, etc., in Pl. Ns. is of this origin and represents M.E. *bīr*, O.E. *bȳre* 'byre'. See Wyld, *E. St.* 47, p. 166. The form *heered* 'hired', *Wentw. Papers*, p. 65 (1708) = O.E. *hȳran*, may represent the 'Kentish' type.

M.E. ai and ei.

§ 268. **Independent Treatment**: [*ai* < æi < ǣ < ɛ̄ < ē < ei].

The old diphthongs *ai*, *ei*, were levelled under one sound [*ai*] in the M.E. period (Chaucer), though the traditional distinction survived in the spelling. As early as the end of the fifteenth century this [*ai*] had been monophthongized to [*ā*] or [ǣ], at least among certain sections of the population, as seems assured from such spellings as *daly* 'daily', *agan* 'again', *pra* 'pray', etc., collected by Zachrisson (p. 64).

On the other hand, while some of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Grammarians refer to a monophthongic pronunciation, they generally do so with disapproval, as very affected, or finicky, and prefer a diphthongal pronunciation. They even go so far as to distinguish between old *ei*, and *ai*. It is pretty generally agreed now, that in the latter point they have simply been misled by the spelling. On the other hand, although the early writers are mostly very shaky in notions of what a diphthong is, it seems probable that [æi] still survived, perhaps as an artificial spelling-pronunciation, well into the seventeenth century. The new monophthong was levelled under the sound of M.E. *ā*, and the subsequent

history of the sound, as we have seen (§ 225), is as indicated above. A fresh diphthongization occurred in the nineteenth century, and in the East Midland and Cockney dialects this has become [*ai*]. In many rural dialects at the present day, e.g. Oxfordshire and Berkshire, the full M.E. [*ai*] remains, and these dialects distinguish absolutely between this and the sound in old *ā* words—*name*, *pale*, etc., which remains as [ɛ̄] or [ē]. It cannot be established with certainty, at what stage *ai* and *ā* were levelled; probably not till after the fronting—[æi, ǣ], possibly in the [ɛ̄ⁱ, ɛ̄] stage. See on this point Luick, *Anglia*, xiv, p. 273, etc.; Viëtor, *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*, § 42.

On the other hand, it is argued by Jespersen, *Hart's Pronunciation of English*, pp. 33–42; *New Engl. Gr.*, pp. 323–8, that the old diphthongs were never monophthongized at all in Standard English, and consequently that the levelling of these with M.E. *ā* did not take place till the [ē] which arose from this was diphthongized. Zachrisson (pp. 196, etc.) thinks that 'much speaks in favour of Jespersen's theory'. These different views depend upon the interpretation of the statements of the early Grammarians. The most careful survey and weighing of these frequently leads to very different conclusions in different minds.

Examples: *clay*, *day*, *way*, *eight*, *rain*, *pray*, *sail*; *vein*, *pain*, *reign*, *dainty*, *saint*, etc.

NOTE. *Key* [kī] is abnormal, and probably owes its form to rural dialect.

Combinative Treatment of M.E. ai.

§ 269. M.E. ai+r becomes [ɛə].

Just as M.E. *ār* did not pass beyond the [ɛ̄r] stage, so M.E. *air* remained at this point of development: *fair* became [fæir, fǣr, fɛ̄r, fɛə]. The M.E. pronunciation [*fair*] still survives in Oxfordshire.

Other examples are: *chair*, *heir*, *prayer* (French); *stair*, *lair*; *their* (Scandinavian).

§ 270. M.E. oi.

This sound appears at the present time as [*oi*], but there is no doubt that this pronunciation is due to the spelling. In the sixteenth century the sound in *toil*, *point*, *coil* and other *oi* words, is described as [ui]. The [u] in this diphthong was then unrounded at the time that the other short [u] sounds underwent this change giving [ai], as is clearly described by seventeenth-century writers. At this point *oi* was levelled

under old *ī* (§ 253), and the normal development of course was [*ai*]. The rhyme *tryall—Disloyal* (Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1613) shows that levelling of the two sounds had taken place. But a pronunciation [oi] also existed in seventeenth century. Frequent rhymes such as *line—join* show that [dža*i*n], etc., were in polite use in the eighteenth century. Kenrick (1773), cit. Ellis, p. 1052, and Jespersen, *New Engl. Gr.*, p. 329, declares that it is an affectation to pronounce *boil, join,* otherwise than as *bile, jine*, and yet it is 'a vicious custom in common conversation' to use this sound in *oil, toil,* which thereby 'are frequently pronounced exactly like *isle, tile*'. This shows that the new pronunciation [*oi*] had not yet been extended to all words. At the present time [*ai*] in any of the *oi*-words is provincial and vulgar. In many genuine *Regional Dialects* the [ai] pronunciation is still used in *oi*- and *ī*-words alike.

The series [oi, ui, ai, *ai*] is postulated by Sweet, *H.E.G.*, § 753.

The chronological usage may be summed up as follows: sixteenth century: [oi, and ui]; seventeenth century: [ui, ai] and already [*oi*] was restored; eighteenth century: [ai, *ai*] and a greater use of restored [*oi*]. (See Zachrisson, p. 221.) Luick, *Anglia,* xiv, pp. 294, etc., says that the sixteenth and seventeenth century [ui, ai] goes back to M.E. *ui*, and the [oi] of these centuries to M.E. *oi*, but this seems very doubtful.

NOTE. In *joist, boil* (on the body), *groin*, which go back to forms with *ɔ*, the [oi] was hitherto explained as due to the artificial restoring tendency too far, by including some of the wrong words. Jespersen, *New Engl. Gr.*, p. 320, objects to this on the ground that *oi* spellings of some of these words occur very early—*boyle* 1529, *joyst* 1494, *groin* Shakespeare's *Ven. and Ad.* rhyming with *swine*. J. suggests that [oi] in *groin* may be due to the influence of *loin*, but offers no suggestions for the other words.

§ 271. Table showing the M.E. origin of Modern English Vowel Sounds.

Present-day Sound.	*M.E. Vowel.*	*Present-day Examples.*	*Reference to §*
[e*i*]	(1) *ā*	*name*	§ 225
	(2) *ai, ei*	*day, way*	§ 268
[*ai*]	(1) *ī*	*wife*	§ 254
	(2) *ih*	*night*	§ 276
[*oi*]	*oi*	*joy*	§ 270
[*au*]	*ū*	*house*	§ 246
[ou]	(1) *ō*[2]	*bone, throat*	§ 240
	(2) *ōu*	*bow* (noun)	§§ 171 (8), 242
[iə]	*ēr*	*fear*	§ 230
[ɛə]	(1) *ār*	*bare*	§ 226
	(2) *air*	*fair*	§ 269
	(3) *ēr*	*bear*	§ 233

Present-day Sound.	*M.E. Vowel.*	*Present-day Examples.*	*Reference to §*
[ī]	(1) $\bar{e}^1$	*see*	§ 229
	(2) $\bar{e}^2$	*sea*	§ 232
[ū]	(1) $\bar{o}^1$	*moon*	§ 236
	(2) $i\bar{\imath}$	*brute*	§ 265
[jū]	(1) $i\bar{\imath}$	*tune*	§ 265
	(2) *ēu*	*blew*	§ 265
	(3) $\bar{\varepsilon}u$	*dew*	§ 265
[ā]	(1) *ăr*	*hard*	§ 222
	(2) *auf*	*half*	§§ 218,221,260
	(3) *ăs*	*pass*	§ 219
	(4) *ăþ*	*path*	§ 219
[ɔ̄]	(1) *au*	*cause*	§ 259
	(2) *aul*	*all*	§ 218
	(3) *or*	*cord*	§ 241
	(4) *oþ, of, os*	*froth, lost, off*	§ 245
[ɝ̄]	(1) *ur*	*curse*	§ 252
	(2) *or*	*word*	§ 239
	(3) *er*	*earth*	§ 228
	(4) *ir*	*bird*	§ 256
[a]	(1) *ŭ*	*nut*	§ 250
	(2) $\bar{o}^1$ (with Early Mod. shortening of [ū] to [ŭ])	*blood*	§ 236 (3)
[ŭ]	(1) ŭ after lip cons.	*put*	§ 251
	(2) $\bar{o}^1$ (with late shortening of Early Mod. [ū])	*good*	§ 236 (2)
[æ]	(1) *ă*	*back*	§ 217
	(2) *ă* from *ŏ*	*strap*	§ 244, Note
[ŏ]	(1) *ŏ*	*cot*	§ 244
	(2) $\bar{o}^2$ (with Mod. shortening)	*hot*	§ 243
	(3) *wa, qua*	*wan, quantity*	§ 223
[ɛ]	(1) ĕ	*well*	§ 227
	(2) $\bar{e}^2$ (with late shortening)	*breath*	§ 235
[ĭ]	(1) *ĭ*	*sit*	§ 255
	(2) eng, enǧ, etc.	*England, hinge*	§ 258
	(3) $\bar{e}^1$ (Early Mod. shortening)	*breeches*	§ 231
[ə]	Back vowels in unstressed sylls.		§ 272

§ 272. Vowels in Unstressed Syllables.

At the present time, the general rule is that in unstressed syllables, back vowels are reduced to [ə], and front vowels to [i]: *bullock, callous, human, breakfast*, etc. = [bulək, kæləs, hjūmən, brɛkfəst], etc., while *cottage, hostess, wretched, palace, houses*, etc. = [kotɪdž, houstɪs, retʃɪd, pælɪs, hauzɪz], etc.

Of the diphthongs, [ou] remains in Present-day Standard: *follow, yellow*, etc., but becomes [ə] in vulgar speech; [oɪ] becomes [ə] in *porpoise, tortoise*, remains in *avoirdupois* [ævədəpoiz], and has a bogus semi-French pronunciation in *chamois* [ʃæmwɔ] as distinct from [ʃæmilɛðə]. The spelling *porpice* in

Marston's *Eastward Hoe* (1605) shows the same treatment of *oi* as in [ʃæm*i*]. The front diphthong [e*i*] is [*i*] in *Tuesday*, *Sunday*, *yesterday*, *holiday*, etc. [tjūzd*i*, sand*i*, jɛstəd*i*, hɔlid*i*] in good natural speech, though these words have [de*i*] in affected, vulgar, and provincial speech.

The influence of the spelling often restores full vowels, however, and these restored forms may become permanent: [ɛdjŭke*i*t, k*au*ntəpe*i*n, o*u*be*i*], etc.; or analogy with a closely related word may bring about the sounding of a full vowel: [kɔntrāst], which owes its [ā] to the verb [kəntrāst]. Again, in compounds, the second or unstressed element of which is still identified in the consciousness with the independent word, the full vowel is kept: [dɔ́stɛp, næpsæk, dambɛl, spūnfŭ*l*] in which the independent *step*, *sack*, *bell*, *full*, prevent the reduction to [stəp, sək, bl, fl].

§ 273. -el, il, in, en.

Front vowels before [l] tend to disappear, and in this case the final consonant becomes syllabic. Thus [sivl, devl, īvl, revl], etc. The pronunciations [siv*i*l, dev*i*l, īv*i*l] are often heard, especially among the clergy. The restoration is due to the spelling, but has now become traditional among many speakers of Received Standard.

In some words the spelling has been changed, showing that the reduction is pretty old: *cockle*, M.E. *cokille*, *subtle*, M.E. *sotil* (Jespersen, *Mod. Engl. Gr.*, p. 267).

Before *n*, *i* sometimes remains, sometimes disappears leaving syllabic [n]. Thus *cousin*, *basin*, *raisin*, are more often [kazn, be*i*sn, re*i*zn], but [*i*n] is frequently restored, especially in *cousin*. *Latin* and *coffin* are now universally [lætɨn, kɔfɨn] in Received Standard, but in many forms of Modified Standard the old-fashioned [lætn, kɔfn] are heard. The same is true of the second syllable of *chicken*, *mountain*, *fountain*, *kitchen*, etc. In these words, by the side of the Received Standard [-*i*n], in Modified Standard two forms are heard—[tʃ*i*kən, tʃ*i*kn; m*au*ntən, m*au*ntn], etc. Final [kn] may become [kŋ], so that we have a third provincial form of *chicken*—[tʃ*i*kŋ].

§ 274. M.E. [y] in Unstressed Syllables.

This shows two developments—[*i*] as in *biscuit*, *minute* (of time), *lettuce* = [b*i*skɨt, m*i*nɨt, lɛt*i*s], and the other [ju] which usually became [jə], as in *fortune*, *nature*, *regulate*, etc. [regj*u*le*i*t, ne*i*tʃə, fōtʃən]. For change of [tj] to [tʃ] see § 280.

It seems probable that the pronunciation [*i*] goes back to [y], whereas the [j*u*] forms are derived from the diphthongized

[iy] which later became [jy, j*u*]. (See § 265 and Note on the existence of the diphthongized and undiphthongized types in E. Mod.) Thus there were presumably in E. Mod. both [nātyr, nætiyr; fortyn, fortiyn], etc. These give respectively the now usual [neitʃə, fɔ̄tʃən], earlier [neitjur, fortjun], etc., and on the other hand the now vulgar [neitə, fɔ̄tin]. Similarly [mínit] is from [mínyt], but the Irish English [minjət] is from [miniyt].

It is pretty certain that these differences are associated with the different types of accentuation in M.E. *Nātúr* gives E. Mod. [nātiyr] whence [neitjə, neitʃə], whereas M.E. *nátur* gives the now vulgar [neitər]. So [fɔrtin] is from M.E. *fórtune*, but [fɔ̄tʃən] is from M.E. *fortúne*. The spellings *creeturs*, *picturs*, *torter* 'torture' occur (1708) in Lady Wentworth's letters. See *Wentw. Papers*, pp. 63 and 64.

It is impossible to say precisely how old our present habit of reducing unstressed vowels to [ə, i] is. It probably is the natural development of the M.E. tendency to shorten long vowels in this position, and to level *o*, *a*, *u*, under *e*. Caxton shows an uneasiness in spelling unstressed vowels, e. g. *London*, *-en*, *myllar*, *scoler*, *murderare*, *folisshe*, *shrewessh*, *comynly*, *-enly*, *-only*, *ägayn*, *aageyne*, *emonge*, etc. See Römstedt, 27, 28. *Edward VI's First P. B.* also has *amonge*, *emonge*, *devil*, *devel*, *deuided*, *diuision*, etc.

For a fuller and more systematic treatment of the vowels in unstressed syllables, the reader is referred to Horn, *Hist. ne. Gr.*, pp. 120–30, and to the remarkable account of them given by Jespersen, *Mod. Engl. Gr.*, chap. ix, pp. 248–84.

§ 275. Changes in Consonantal Sounds in Modern Period.

M.E. [χ], written *h*, *gh*, had two developments, as indicated in § 260, Note. The one type had considerable lip-action, and may be expressed [χʷ], the others very little or none. Type [χʷ] increased the lip-action, and diminished the action of the back of the tongue, and from this type already in the M.E. period [f] developed through intermediate [ʍ]. We may infer M.E. [f] in words like *bought* from occasional spellings such as *boft*. Though in Standard English we find no [ft] forms, except *laughter* and *draft*, there are several in the dialects. *Laughter*, which does not betray its type by its spelling, may owe its [f] before *t* to the form *laugh*. In any case it would seem as though the [f] types were introduced comparatively late into the Standard form of English, since they are expressed in the received spelling nowhere except in *draft* by the side of *draught*. In Early Mod., several of the Grammarians record

the pronunciation [lɑuχ, brouχt], etc., as well as [lɑ̆f]. Cp. also the rhyme man*slaughter—laughter*, in *Roister Doister* (1553). It is not to be supposed that these forms developed into [lɑ̆f, dɔftə] 'daughter', but that in certain cases the [f] replaced the [χ] types. With regard to the latter, the [χ] seems to have been slightly sounded into the seventeenth century, and then to have disappeared.

Finally, Standard English has always the [f] type, but before *t*, the vanishing [χ] type in nearly all cases. In the South, and S. West Midland *broute* is found already in the thirteenth century (Laȝamon); *navt* 'naught', Hali Meidenhed (1225); *dowter* 'daughter', Songs and Carols (1400). More convincing is perhaps the spelling *foghte* = foot in W. of Shoreham. See my 'Contributions to Hist. of Engl. Gutturals', *Trans. Phil. Soc.*, 1900, p. 159.

§ 276. M.E. ht [jt].

In such words as *night*, *sight*, *fight*, etc., the *ĭ*, in M.E. *niht*, etc., must have been lengthened before the diphthonging of old *ī*, since we now have [nɑi̯t], etc. This diphthonging began, in the South, and in the London dialect, at latest in the fifteenth century (§ 254). It does not follow, however, that the consonant had disappeared before the lengthening was complete. It may simply have been voiced, giving [nijt] with a half-long vowel, and the pronunciations [nījt] and then [neijt] may have persisted in certain sections of the community, and in certain districts for a long time. On the one hand we have pretty clear evidence from such spellings as *delight*, *spright*, *spight*, *quight* (quite), *whight* (colour), *waight* (to wait) in Surrey, Wyatt, Tusser, and Spenser—earlier *-ite*, that by their time, and in the Standard Dialect, *-gh-* was no more than a symbol of length, while on the other, some Grammarians claim that *-gh-* is heard in the seventeenth century. If it lingered so long, it must have had but a very slight sound, and that probably confined to the language of the lower classes. At the present day [j] is still heard in *night*, etc., in Scotland, where the word is usually [nijt], such a pronunciation as [nɑ̆ijt] being probably a blending with the Standard form of the word. [nīt], etc., in some Northern English Dialects, shows that the vowel was only fully lengthened and the consonant lost, after the period of diphthongization.

§ 277. M.E. gn-, kn-.

The initial combination *gn*, in *gnaw*, *gnat*, etc., had certainly disappeared by the middle of the seventeenth century. *kn*

seems to have first become [tn], then the nasal was unvoiced, the [t] lost, and finally [n̥] was voiced again. Thus *knife* had some such development as [knaif, tnaif, tn̥aif, n̥aif, naif]. The first assimilation to [tn] had taken place in the seventeenth century, but voiceless [n̥] lingered, apparently, well into the eighteenth. In the middle of words, [kn] remained in the [tn] stage much longer, and Pope and other contemporary writers have *Twittenham* for *Twickenham*. See on this subject, Horn, *Beitr. z. Gesch. d. engl. Gutturallaute*, pp. 1, etc.; Wyld, *Mod. Lang. Qrtrly.*, v, p. 20; and Jespersen, *Mod. Engl. Gr.*, pp. 351, 352.

§ 278. Loss of l before consonants.

The rules for the retention or loss of [l] have been simply formulated by Luick, *Anglia*, xvi, p. 465: *l* is retained initially, and medially before vowels, and before point (and blade-point) consonants; it is lost before back- and lip-consonants. Thus *lamb*, *follow*, etc., *salt*, *malt*, *alder*, etc. = [sɔ̄lt, mɔ̄lt, ɔ̄ldə], but *yolk*, *stalk*, *talk*, *walk*, etc. = [jouk, stɔ̄k, tɔ̄k, wɔ̄k], etc., and *balm*, *half*, *calf*, *Holborn*, etc. = [bām, hāf, kāf, hoʊbən], etc.

§ 279. Loss of [r].

In Standard English, at the present time, [r] is lost after a vowel, before consonants: *hard*, *bird*, *harl*, etc. [hād, bɐ̄d, hɐ̄l]; at the end of a word in a sentence, when the next word begins with a consonant: *Sir John*, *poor dog*, etc. [sə dǯɔ́n, puə (or pɔ̄) dɔg]; at the end of a single word when nothing follows: *war*, *dear*, *fair*, etc. [wɔ̄, dɪə, fɛə]. It is, however, retained in a word between vowels: *sorrow*, *hurry* [sɔrou, harɪ]; and at the end of a word in a series when the next word begins with a vowel, and when there is no pause between them: *dear Arthur*, *for ever*, *there it is* [dɪər āþə, fər ɛvə, ðɛərɪ tɪ́z]. The disappearance, under these conditions, is noted by Grammarians quite early in the eighteenth century, and already in 1708 Lady Wentworth writes *Gath* for *Garth*, and *Operer* (*Wentw. Papers*, pp. 63, 66), while Peter Wentworth writes *Auther* for *Arthur*, ibid. p. 77; in 1775 Walker transcribes *bar*, *bard*, *card*, *regard*, as *baa*, *baad*, etc. See Jespersen, *Mod. Engl. Gr.*, p. 361.

It is typical of many Regional and Class Dialects to-day, that they retain [r] when Received Standard omits it.

Among the younger generation at the present time, there is a tendency to omit [r] between vowels at the end of one word and the beginning of the next, so that we often hear such pronunciations as [fā ɔwei, fə ɛvə, ðɛə ɪtɪ́z], etc., and even in

the middle of words between vowels [vi̯ktəjə, hæ-*i̯*, vɛ-*i̯*, mɛə-*i̯*] *Victoria*, *Harry*, *very*, *Mary*. See on this tendency my *Growth of English*, pp. 77 and 78.

§ 280. [sj, zj] become [ʃ, ž]; [dj, tj] become [dž, tʃ].

This change is universal in some words, and in others is the rule, except in very careful and affected speech, or where the spelling has reintroduced the older pronunciation.

sugar, *sure*, *fissure*, *literature*; *pleasure*, *leisure*, *azure*, *seizure*, etc. = [ʃu̯gə, ʃu̯ə] (or [ʃɔ̄]), [fi̯ʃə, li̯trətʃə, plɛžə, lɛžə, æžə, sīžə]. We have now restored [sj] or [si̯], etc. in a number of words such as *issue*, *tissue*, *presume*, *suit* [i̯sjū, ti̯sjū, pri̯zjūm, sjūt].

This is especially the case in the combination *-di-* : *odious*, *hideous*, *Indian*, now [ou̯di̯əs, hi̯di̯əs, i̯ndi̯ən], when as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century Walker recommends [ou̯dži̯əs, i̯ndži̯ən], etc. On the other hand, [rai̯tʃəs] is as common as [rai̯ti̯əs] even in liturgical use.

In words ending in *-ture*, *-tune*, *-súre*, *nature*, *creature*, *feature*, *fortune*, etc., the [tʃ] presupposes an old [iu], earlier [ȳ] (§ 256), [neitiur < neitjur < neitʃər], etc. [æžə] goes back to [æzjur < æžju̯r < æžər], etc.

These tendencies are as old as the seventeenth century, and are still active. Thus in rapid speech we say [Gɔd blɛʃu̯, ai̯ʃl di̯smi̯ʃu̯, ai̯m glædai̯ mɛtʃu̯, hi̯ hædžu̯ ðɛə, ai̯ kān̄t prei̯žu̯, hí tɛlž ju̯ ɛvri̯þiŋ], and so on, where the change takes place in the final sound of one word, before the initial sound of that which follows.

CHAPTER VIII

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ENGLISH INFLEXIONS

Definite Article and Demonstrative Pronouns

§ 281. **The O.E. Demonstrative Pronoun** meaning 'that', but also used merely as a definite article, has the following forms:

	Sing.			Pl.—all Genders.
	M.	F.	N.	
N.	*sē*	*seo*	*þæt*	*þā*
A.	*þone*	*þā*	*þæt*	*þā*
G.	*þæs*	*þǣre*	*þæs*	*þāra, þǣra*
D.	*þǣm, þām*	*þǣre*	*þǣm, þām*	*þǣm, þām*
I.	*þȳ, þon*			

§ 282. **The O.E. Demonstrative Pronoun** meaning 'this' is as follows:

	Sing.			Pl.—all Genders.
	M.	F.	N.	
N.	*þes*	*þēos*	*þis*	*þās*
A.	*þisne*	*þās*	*þis*	*þās*
G.	*þisses*	*þisse*	*þisses*	*þissa*
D.	*þissum*	*þissum*	*þissum*	*þissum, þeosum*
I.	*þȳs*			

The Definite Article in M.E.

§ 283. The M.E. development, in all dialects, is in the direction of a gradual loss of all distinctions of Number, Gender, and Case, and the use of a single form which is indeclinable. The process of loss went on very rapidly in the North and Midlands, comparatively slowly in the South-West, and in Kentish. The first thing that happens is that for the Nom. Sing. *sē, seo*, is substituted a form *þe*, which owes its *þ* to the analogy of the initial in the forms of all the other cases, Sing. and Pl. This indeclinable form is found to some extent, even in the South, in the earliest texts, alongside of the inflected forms.

§ 284. **The South, and S. West Dialects.**

Twelfth Century. *H. Rd. Tree* (1170), which is copied from an O.E. text, preserves the O.E. forms of the Def. Art. to a great extent, though the distinctions of Gender and Case are already weakening.

The uninflected *þe* occurs once as an Acc. Sing. M., and once as a F. Sing. The Nom. *se* only occurs once. *þēo* is once used as Acc. S. Fem. instead of *þā*. The regular Acc. S. Masc. is *þone*; *þene* occurs, but rarely. The Dat. S. Fem. is *þāre*. The Neuter *þæt* is used uninflected as in *of þæt wætere*. *þet* is used three times with a Fem. Noun. The Gen. Pl. is *þāre*, *þāræ*.

[I owe these statistics to Prof. Napier's Introduction to the text.]

Lambeth Homilies (before 1200) has the indecl. *þe* for both Sing. and Pl. In addition, however, it has full forms of the M. Sing.: N. *þe*; Acc. *þen*, *þene*, *þenne*; Dat. *þon*, *þan*. In the Fem. Sing. only the Dat. *þer* survives, and in the Neut. *þet*, and *þat* (Nom.). The Pl. *þā* is used without inflexions for all cases, but the Dat. *þan* occurs.

Trinity Homilies (before 1200) seems to have only the uninflected *þe*.

Thirteenth Century. *Ancren Riwle* (1210) uses the indecl. *þe* very commonly, but also preserves the Acc. *þene*, Gen. *þes*, Dat. *þen*, in the Masc. Sing. *þet* is used as an Article as well as demonstratively, without distinction of Gender. The Fem. *þer* is found in Gen. and Dat. In the Pl. *þēo* is used, undeclined, and *þen* survives in the Dat.

Moral Ode, and *Owl and Nightingale* (circa 1250) have *þe* indecl. regularly established; the former has also *se*, and the latter uses the indecl. Pl. *þēo*.

Robt. of Glos. (1298) uses chiefly the indeclinable *þe*, but occasionally *þen* after a preposition—*þorow þen ēye*, and the Neut. *þet*, *þat*, as a genuine Article.

Fourteenth Century. *Trevisa* (1387) has *þe* exclusively.

Fifteenth Century. *St. Editha* (1420), apart from such survivals of *þet* as *þe tōne*, *þe tōþer*, has only *þe* for all Genders, Cases, and both Numbers.

We see that by the end of the twelfth century already, the feeling for Gender and Case is much weakened, though the forms survive; that during the next two centuries, the indeclinable *þe* gains ground, the other forms being used more and more rarely, until by the end of the fourteenth century or the

beginning of the fifteenth, *þe* is the exclusive form apart from a few fossilized phrases.

The Definite Article in the Midland Texts.

§ 285. The East Midland.

Twelfth Century. In the second continuation of the *A.-S. Chron.* (MS. Laud) written between 1122 and 1137, we find the indeclinable *þe* already in frequent use, and by its side the more archaic *se*, and sometimes *þa*. On the other hand, the inflected forms Sing. Masc., Acc. and Dat. *þone*, Gen. *þes*; Fem. N. and D. *þā*; Neut. Gen. *þes*, N. and Acc. *þet*, also occur. Feeling for Gender is dying out. The usual Pl. form is *þā*, undeclined.

In the third continuation, between 1132 and 1154, the indeclinable *þe* is fully established for all Genders and Cases and both Numbers, but *þā* is often used undeclined in the Pl. *Seo ærcebiscop* occurs, which shows how the feeling for Gender was fading.

Thirteenth Century. *Orm.* (1200) distinguishes only between Sing. and Pl., *þe* in the former, *þā* in the latter, and the same is true of *Gen. and Ex.* (1250), except that this text writes *þō* for the Pl. form. *Bestiary* (1250) has *þe* only, for both numbers.

We occasionally find *þat* in these texts, used rather as a Demonstrative than as a pure Art. We get also survivals like *þe tone*, and *G. and E.* sometimes uses *þō* as a Dat. Sing.

§ 286. The Definite Article in Kentish Texts.

Twelfth Century. The earliest M.E. Kt. text, a collection of *Homilies* (MS. Vesp. A. 22) (1150), has already the indeclinable *þe*, but uses also *se* in the Nom. Masc. Otherwise, the O.E. forms, or their representatives, are pretty well preserved, which may be accounted for by the fact that this text is based upon an O.E. original.

We have in the Masc., a Gen. *þes*, and a Dat. *þan* and *þam*; in the Fem., a Nom. *si*, Acc. *þō*, *þā*, Dat. *þare* and *þer*. In the Pl. *þā*, and Dat. *þan*.

Thirteenth Century. *Kentish Sermons* (1250) has *se*, and *þe* and *þō* (indecl.) in Sing. Masc., Gen. *þes*, Dat. *þan*, Acc. *þane*, and a Fem. N. *si*, Neut. *þet*. The Pl. has *þe*, *þa*, *þō* (indecl.).

Fourteenth Century. *Wil. of Shoreham* (1307–27) and *Ayenbite* (1340) show the fully developed use of the uninflected *þe* irrespective of Number, Gender, and Case. *þet* is

used, but appears to be chiefly demonstrative. Both texts make an occasional Acc. Masc. *pane*.

The Definite Article in the London and Literary Dialect.

§ **287.** The London Dialect of Hen. III's Proclamation (1258) has an Indecl. Sing. *þe*, Indecl. Pl. *þō*, but also Acc. Sing. *þane*, Dat. *þan*, a Neut. Sing. *þæt*, and the form *þære* used as a Gen. Sing. before *-riche* 'kingdom', that is an old Gen. Fem. of the Art. before a Neuter word. Davie has only *þe*, indeclinable.

Chaucer, Gower, and Wycliffe use the indeclinable *þe*, *the* both for Sing. and Pl. and retain no distinctions of Case or Gender. The earlier *þō*, which survives as the Pl. form, occurs in Gower, only as the Pl. Demonstrative. It is, however, preserved by Mandeville (1356) as the Pl. Art., side by side with *the*.

The London official documents of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries have practically the same usage. The uninflected *þe*, *the* is the commonest form for all Genders and Cases, S. and Pl. *þet oon*, *þet oþer* occur, and the specifically Pl. *þō* is actually found as late as 1427, in the Parliamentary Records. We must suppose that by that time it was an archaism as the Pl. of the article. The later fifteenth-century London Charters also occasionally use *tho*, *thoo*, but with a more definitely demonstrative force (Lekebusch, p. 111), and a few examples of it are also recorded as occurring in Caxton (Römstedt, p. 41), and, as a rarity, in Coverdale (Swearingen, p. 17).

The Definite Article in Modern English.

§ **288.** By the end of the M.E. period all forms of the article except *þe*, *the* had practically vanished. *þat* had become a pure Demonstrative, and its subsequent history falls under that head. Even the old distinction between Sing. and Pl. which survived in the literary usage of the late fourteenth century had disappeared from common use.

All that remains, in the Mod. period, of the once varied declension of the Definite Art. must be sought in a few set phrases, and words which preserve, here and there, the fossil of a case ending.

For the nonce contains the old Masc. or Neut. Dat. *þen*, O.E. *þǣm*. The name *Atterbury* preserves an old Dat. Fem.—M.E. *atter*, or *at þer*, *buri*, O.E. *æt þǣre byriġ*. Such names as *Nash*, *Nalder*, and *Noakes* are all that is left of M.E. *at þen asche*, *at þen aldre*, *at þen ōkes*.

Demonstrative Pronouns This and That

§ **289.** We have seen that *þat*, the old Neuter N. and Acc. of Demonstrative Pron. and Article, is used with less and less of the general sense of the latter, and more and more with the more specific demonstrative sense, after the twelfth century. The old Pl. *þā*, later *þō*, except in the North, serves at first both as Pl. Art., and as that of the demonstrative 'that'. This is gradually displaced by *þās, þōs*, the old Pl. meaning 'these'. *þōs* is of course the ancestor of the Mod. *those*, *þō* being retained almost exclusively as the Pl. of the Def. Art. *þe*. *Tho* in the sense of 'those' occurs, however, at least as late as 1469, in Malory.

'This' is expressed by *þis, þes, þēos*, with gradual loss of distinction of Gender, until *þis*, the old Neuter form, becomes the prevailing one in the Sing.

A new Pl. *þēose, þēse* is formed on the type of the Nom. Fem. Sing., or Dat. Pl., and this is the ancestor of *these*. In the Nth. *þir*, and occasionally *þer*, is found in the sense of 'these'; more rarely *þir* means 'those'.

Moral Ode (MS. Jesus 1250) has a Nom. Pl. *þēo* 'those'.

In the South, the Acc. Sing. Masc. *þesne* occurs in the early thirteenth century (*God Ureisun*). An inflected form *þise* is often used in the oblique cases in the Sth., in Kt. and Midl.

In twelfth-century Kentish (Vesp. A. 22) we find the inflected forms *þesses, þeses*, Gen. Pl.

þō as the Pl. of *þis* is found in *Kt. Sermons* (1250), *Lambeth Homilies*, and in *Allit. P.*

Morsbach's London documents have *þis, thys*, Pl. *thise*, but also *þees, thees, these*, etc.; *þat, that*, Pl. *þo, þoo, tho, thōō*, etc. This is also Chaucer's usage. Caxton has *this*, Pl. *thise, this*, and *these*.

Thoos (Pl. of *that*) occurs, but only sporadically (Römstedt, p. 41). In the later fifteenth-century London Charters, *thes, these* are the usual forms for the Pl. of *this*, but *those*, etc., is found fairly often (Lekebusch, pp. 111, 112).

The Personal Pronouns.

§ **290.** The O.E. forms are the following:

	1st		2nd		3rd Sing.			Pl., all Genders.
	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	M.	F.	N.	
N.	*iċ*	*wē*	*þū*	*ġē*	*hē*	*hēō*	*hit*	*hie, hi*, etc.
A.	*mēċ, mē*	*ūs*	*þē*	*ēow*	*hine*	*hīe, hi*	*hit*	*hie, hi*, etc.
G.	*mīn*	*ūre*	*þīn*	*ēower*	*his*	*hire*	*his*	*hira* / *hiera* / *heora*
D.	*mē*	*ūs*	*þē*	*ēow*	*him*	*hire*	*him*	*him, heom*

DUAL.

1st Pers.	2nd Pers.
N. *wit* 'we two'	N. *git* 'ye two'
A. *uncit, unc*	A. *incit, inc*
G. *uncer*	G. *incer*
D. *unc*	D. *inc*

§ **291.** Compared with the inflexions of Nouns and Adjectives, those of the Pers. Pron. have been wonderfully well preserved in English.

The chief points to notice in the history of their usage are: (1) the generalizing of the Acc. Dat. *ēow—you* for the whole Pl. with the loss of the Nom. *ye*; (2) the loss of the Acc. *hine*; (3) the loss of the strong, aspirated *hit*; (4) the development of the form *she* for the old *hēō* in the Fem.; (5) the substitution of *they, their, them*, the Scandinavian forms, for the English; (6) the loss by the old Genitives *mīn, pīn, his*, etc., of the real Genitive force, and the reduction of them to mere possessive Adjectives; (7) the loss of the old Dual forms.

The Pers. Pronouns in M.E.

§ **292. The First Person.** There is little change and variety to record here. Practically all the early texts have: N. *ic, ich*, but *i* is found in *Laud Chron.* (1137); Acc. Dat. *mē*, and in the Pl. N. *wē*, Acc. Dat. *us, ous*. The Sthn. texts usually write *ich*, the earliest (down to thirteenth century) having also *ic*. The E. Midl. *Orm.* has *icc*. Northern texts have *ik*, and *i*. The form *I*, the only form now surviving, except in a small district in the S.-West, where *uch* [utʃ] (M.E. *iich, ich*) still lingers, comes into frequent use in all dialects, apparently, in the fourteenth century. Chaucer has *I*, but still uses *ich*. *I* no doubt arose originally in unstressed positions. *Ich* continues in common use in the S. and S.-West during the whole M.E. period. *St. Editha* (1420), however, usually has *I*, but still joins *ich* on to auxiliary verbs—*ichaue*; *ichulle* 'I will'; *icham*. The author of *Piers Plowman* has *I* and *ich*, whereas Mandeville, Gower (*Confessio Amantis*), and Wycliffe use *I* as the only form.

Davie's poems in the London dialect of the early fourteenth century have both *ich* and *I*, the former being roughly five times as frequent as the latter.

The weak *i* had of course a short vowel. After the loss of *ich*, etc., *i* was used in stressed as well as in unstressed positions. In the former it was lengthened to *ī*, thus becoming a new strong form, distinguished by quantity from the un-

stressed form. It is from M.E. *ī* that the Mod. *I* [*ai*] developed, and this is now used in unstressed as well as in stressed positions.

§ 293. **Dual of First Pers.**

Traces of this are found in *Owl and Nightingale* (c. 1250). The Possessive or Gen. *unker* 'of us two', and the Dat. *unk*.

The Pronoun of the Second Person.

§ 294. The usual M.E. forms are:

Sing.	Pl.
N. *þū, þou, thou*, etc.	*ȝē, yē*, etc.
A. D. *þē, thee*, etc.	*ēow, ȝou, ȝuw, you*, etc.

The Pl. *yē, you* are already used, as in Mod. Engl., by Chaucer and other M.E. writers in polite and respectful address, applied to a single person. Davie (1307–27) uses both *þee*, Dat. S., and *ȝee*, Nom., in addressing our Lord; also *ȝou*, Dat. Pl., in addressing Edward II. The Angel speaking to Davie says *þou, þee*. In a general way the distinction between Sing. and Pl. was maintained during the whole M.E. period. The Sing. *thou, thee*, were used late into Mod. English, in addressing inferiors, and in affectionate, intimate relations. In Present-day Standard English, the Singular forms are never used except in addressing the Deity. According to *E. D. Gr.*, the Pron. of 2nd Pers. is in use in nearly all the dialects of England 'to express familiarity or contempt'. It has disappeared from use in S. Scotl., and is very rarely heard in other parts of the country. Among the Society of Friends, *thee* still lingers as a Nom.

Confusion of ye and you.

The Mod. *you* is of course the old Dat. Caxton still uses *ye* for the Nom. and *you* only in oblique case. The sixteenth-century language of the Prayer Book, and the seventeenth-century language of the Authorized Version of the Bible, preserve the old distinction—e.g. 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you'. This seems to be the polite usage, as noted by Hoelper, p. 48, with regard to *Tottel's Miscellany*.

Otherwise confusion exists among sixteenth and seventeenth century writers, *ye* and *you* being used indiscriminately as Nom. or Obj. Apart from liturgical use, *ye* only survives in Stand. Engl. in a few phrases: [h*aud*ɪdū], where [ɪ], with loss of [j], is due to its unstressed position, [þæŋkī] and [lʊkī], now old-fashioned, and obsolescent. In the form [ĭ] it survives in

many rustic dialects, chiefly, I believe, in unstressed positions [kam jār wɨl i; dɨdnt *ai* tɛl i ?].

The use of *thee* as a Nom. among the Friends is doubtless due to the analogy of the other Nom. forms with the sound [ī]—*he*, *she*, *we*, and further to the Pl. *ye*.

The use of *ye* as an Obj. case is probably due to the analogy of the normal Early Mod. *thee* in the Sing., and the other Acc. Dat. form *me*.

The use of *you* as a Nom. may have been influenced by the Sing. *thou*, though certainly the two forms had not the same vowel.

There is no doubt that the various forms of the Pers. Pronouns have influenced each other in this way. In different periods, and among different divisions of the Community, there have been different starting-points—either [ī] as expressing an Obj. Sing. on the pattern of *me*, *thee*; a Nom. Pl. on the model of *ye*, *we*; or Nom. Sing. on the lines of *he*, *she*.

Pronouns of the 3rd Person in M.E.

§ 295. Masculine Singular.

The usual forms are, like the O.E., Nom. *he*, Dat. *him*.

The old Acc. *hine* is not very common in M.E., the Dat. *him* is used indifferently even in early texts for both Acc. and Dat. Even those texts which preserve *hine*, *hyne*, or *hin* use *him* also for the Acc. The old Acc. is found in *Lambeth Homilies*, *Owl and Nightingale*, and *Moral Ode* (Trinity MS.); in *Robt. of Glos.* (once after *mid*), the *Kentish Sermons*, and Shoreham's *Poems*. These texts, however, and the other Sthn. texts use *him* also. The earliest London sources have only *him*, *hym*. All the earliest E. Midl. texts use *him* indiscriminately for Dat. and Acc., though *Gen. and Ex.* has *hin* twice, once after *of*, and *hine* once.

The unstressed Dat. form *im* without the aspirate occurs in this text joined to the preceding verb—*madim* 'made for him', and in the same text the weak *e* occurs—'And spac uneðes, so *e* gret, ðat alle hise wlite wurð teres wet.'

Seeing how common the modern descendant of *hine* [ən] is in the rural dialects chiefly of the South and S.-West (cf. Wright, *Dial. Gr.*, § 405 b), it is surprising that it is not to be found oftener in M.E. literature, where it survives only till the early fourteenth century (Shoreham), and only in scattered examples. The form [ən] is always unstressed and used chiefly of inanimate objects, so far as my experience goes (in Oxfordshire and Berks.), and though sometimes applied to men, it is

never used of women. In Oxfordshire at any rate, the *stressed* form of the Acc. Pron. Masc. is now generally [ī], not [*i*m] and never [in].

§ 296. **Feminine Singular.**

The origin of the mysterious Nom. form *she*, which has been the only form in literary English at any rate since the middle of the fourteenth century, is a puzzle that has never been satisfactorily solved. It may be a kind of blend between the old Fem. Art. and Demonstr. *sēo*, M.E. [sjō] and the old Fem. Pers. Pron. *hēo*, M.E. [hjō], but this is pure conjecture.

It will be well to give first an account of the earliest appearance, and the distribution of those forms of the Fem. Pron. which are either the ancestors or close relations of Mod. *she*, and then an account of the numerous other forms used in early M.E. with the same meaning.

The earliest appearance of any pronoun at all like *she* is in E. Midl. in the latter part of the *Laud Chron.* (middle of twelfth century), where *sċæ* is fairly frequent. *Orm.*, fifty years later, does not know the form at all, nor does the *Bestiary* of 1250. *Gen. and Ex.*, however, of approximately the same date, has *she*, and *sge* = [sje], together with other forms to be considered below. *She* and *sho* appear in *Havelok* (1300) but not in *King Horn*, about the same date.

It appears from this, since these are all E. Midl. texts, that the new form was established, on the whole, pretty firmly in the East Midlands, at any rate from the middle of the thirteenth century. The W. Midl. texts show *sche*, etc., coming in by the middle of the fourteenth century. Thus *Will. of Pal.* (1350) has *sche*, *she*, but also *ȝhe* and *hue*; *Allit. P.* has not the *she*-form at all, only *ho*; the author of *Piers Plowman* has *sche* but also *heo*. Audelay (1430) has generally *heo*, but *che* and *she* occur a few times each; *sheo* occurs twice (Rasmussen, p. 78). Myrc, however (c. 1430), has no instance of such a form as *sche*.

The more polished fourteenth-century writers of the Midlands, Mandeville, Chaucer, Wycliffe, and Gower, all have *sche* or *she* only, which coincides with the prevailing usage in the London dialect of this period. The London documents (Morsbach), however, still have a few examples of *ȝhe*. The later London Charters have *she*, *sche* only (Lekebusch, p. 107). Northern Engl. and Scots texts have *s(c)ho*, *schō*.

Any form such as *sche*, *sċæ*, etc., appears to be unknown during the whole M.E. period in any pure Southern text,

whether Kentish or Saxon in dialect, apart from the quite exceptional *shee* which occurs once or twice in Trevisa instead of his usual *heo*, *hue*; cp. Morris's *Introd. to Ayenbite*, p. i.

We may say, then, that *she*, whether it actually arose in the Nth., or the E. Midl., or in both independently, must have penetrated into Literary and Standard Engl. from the E. Midl. dialect.

Other forms of the Pron. of 3rd Person Fem.

§ **297.** Perhaps the commonest form (Nom.) in the South is *heo*, probably originally = [hŏ]. This was later unrounded to *hē*, which we find, together with *hī*, in *St. Ed.* *Hi* also appears in Kentish (*Ayenbite*). The form *hi* is used occasionally as an Acc., though the Dat. *hire*, *hir* already in *Laud Chr.* has come into use for that purpose. The inconvenience of *hi*, which was also, as we shall see, a common form for the N. and Acc. Pl., and of *hēo*, or *hē*, which was identical with the Masc. Pron., is obvious.

What appears to be an unstressed form, *ha*, occurs by the side of *hēo* in *A. R.* Late Sthn. (Trevisa) has, besides *hēo*, a form *hue* which may = [hy], and be due either to the analogy of the Gen. *hur*, *hure* (O.E. *hyre*), or to a special treatment of [ø] from *ēo* (cp. § 169 above). In the latter case *hue* would simply be a late form of *hēo*. *St. Ed.* (1420) has *hee*, *hē*, as the only forms.

Turning to the Midlands, we find a fair variety of forms besides *sche*, etc., already discussed. *Orm.* has *ȝho* which probably = [hjō] from *hēo*; *Bestiary* has *ge*, probably = [hjē], also from *hēo* with unrounding of [ø] or monophthonging of *ēo*; *Gen. and Ex.* besides *she*, *sge*, has *ge* and *ghe*, which mean no doubt the same thing and correspond to the form in *Bestiary*; *King Horn* still writes *heo*. The W. Midl. *Wil. of Pal.* has *hue*, and *Allit. P.* *hō*, which presumably is due to a late O.E. **h(e)ō*; *Ios. of Ar.* *heo*; Myrc has generally *heo*, but also occasionally *ho* and *he*. This form is probably the ancestor of the Mod. dial. [hū] used in Derbyshire and Cheshire.

§ **298.** Had the M.E. distribution of the forms of this pronoun remained undisturbed, we should apparently have had *she* [ʃī], in Standard Eng., in the E. Midl. and in the North generally; we should have had [hī] in the Southern Area, including Kent, together with a weak form [ə], while in

the West, and perhaps the Central Midlands, we should have [hū].

§ **299.** The M.E. Dat. Fem. of the pronoun of the 3rd Pers. is regularly *hire*, *hir*, or *here*, *her*, and these forms are found in all dialects, though careful authors, or scribes (e.g. Gower), sometimes distinguish between *hir*, *hire*, on the one hand, which they keep for the Fem. Sing., and *here*, etc., which is the Possessive Pl., on the other. The majority of texts, however, write *hire*, *here*, indifferently. This is the case in some Chaucer MSS., though others use *hire* in the Fem. Sing., and *here* in the Possessive Pl.; others again reverse this. The London official documents of the fourteenth century use *here*, *her* for the Fem. Sing. D. Mandeville and Wycl. have *hir*, *hire*.

Parallel to the M.E. levelling of the Sing. Acc. Masc. pronoun under the Dat. form, is the use of the Dat. Fem. for the Acc. also, which is universal in all dialects. The Acc. *hi*, referring to a grammatically Fem. Noun, used in *O. and N.* and in Shoreham, is exceptional. Modern usage has fixed on *her* as the Acc. Dat. Sing. Fem. The weakened form of this, without the aspirate, must have been in use in M.E., though it is not so commonly recorded as the weakened form of *hit* (cp. § 300). *St. Editha* has *hoselder and aneled herre*, 'communicated her and gave her extreme unction'.

[On the distribution of *hir* and *her* in M.E. see § 305, under Possessive Pronouns.]

The Neuter Pronoun of the 3rd Pers.

§ **300.** The usual Nom. and Acc. form in M.E. is *hit* in all dialects, and the other cases are identical with those of the Masc. Pron.

Weakening to *it*.

This is noticeable in E. Midl. texts of an early date: *Laud Chron.*, *Orm.*, *Bestiary*, *Gen. and Ex.* all have the weakened form. The W. Midl. have both *hit* and *it*. The earliest Sthn. and Kentish texts have *hit*, *hyt*, but the late thirteenth-century *Robt. of Glos.* has *it* as well as *hit*. This appears to be exceptional in the South, where *hit*, *hyt* are the typical forms.

The earliest London sources have *hit* only. Davie (1327) has *hit* and *it*.

The form *a* used by Trevisa as an impersonal pronoun should be noted. The same writer uses this form also as a

weak (unstressed) form of the Masc. (or Neut.?) Pron. It refers to the agate stone in the phrase *a ys blak as gemmes buþ, . . . a brenneþ yn water.*

Of the fourteenth-century London documents the Charters generally have either *hit* or *it*; only once, according to Morsbach (*Schriftspr.*, pp. 121–3), do both forms occur in the same document; the Wills and State Records have both forms.

Gower generally has *it*, seldom *hit*; Chaucer has both, *hit* being commoner.

Caxton (*Troye*) still retains *hit*, *hyt*, though *it* is commoner. (Cp. also Römstedt, p. 40.)

The late fifteenth-century Charters have both forms, *it* being the more common (Lekebusch, p. 107).

The Plural Forms of the 3rd Person (Nom., Acc., Dat.).

§ **301.** The normal M.E. continuations of the O.E. *hie* Nom. and Acc., *heom* Dat., and *heora*, *hira* Gen., are *hi*, *hem*, *here*, *hire*, respectively, or variants of these. (The Gen. forms will be considered below, § 306, under Possessive Pronouns.) The point of interest in the history of the Pl. forms is the gradual introduction and substitution for the native forms of the forms *þei*, *þeim*, *þeir*, and their variants, which are of Scandinavian origin.

It would appear that no *pure* Southern or Kentish text has any of these *þ*-forms before the fifteenth century. The form *þai* 'they' occurs, strangely enough, in the *Wooing of our Lord* (c. 1210), but this must be due to Midl. influence. The following table shows the N., A., and D. forms in the principal Sth. and Kt. texts down to the middle of the fourteenth century:

S. and S.W.

	Lambeth Homs.	Moral Ode.	Ancren Riwle.	Soules Warde.	God Ureisun.	O.&N.	R. of Glos.	Trevisa.
N.	*heo, ha*	*hi, hy*	*heo, ha*	*ha*	*heo*	*hi, heo*	*hii, hi*	*hy, hi, a*
A.			*ham*	*heo*	*ham*	*hom*	*hom*	*ham*
D.	*heom, ham*	*heom, him*	*ham*		*ham*	*heom, hom*	*hem, hom*	*ham*

Kentish.

	Vesp. A. 22.	Kt. Sermons.	Shoreham.	Ayenbite.
N.	*hi*	*hi*	*hi, hy*	*hi*
A.		*hi, hii*	*ham*	*hise, his* (very frequent)
D.	*ham*	*ham*	*hem*	*ham*

The fifteenth-century *St. Editha* seems to be the first Sthn. text which has *þey*, *þai* in the N. Pl., and these are the only

forms, but the native forms *hem* Acc. and Dat., and *hure*, etc. (cp. § 306 below) are retained.

The E. Midl. texts tell a very different story, and we find the Scandinavian forms coming in quite early, but even in this area the Nom. is earlier than the other cases.

	1200.	1250.	1250.	1300.	1300.	1300–30.	1370–1450.
	Laud Chron.	Orm.	Bestiary.	Gen. & Ex.	Have-lok.	King Horn.	Robt. of Brunne.	Boken-am.
N.	*hi*	*þe33*	*he*	*he*	*þei, he*	*hi, he*	*þey*	*they, þei*
A.	*heom*	*hemm*	*hem*	*hem*	*hem*	*hem*	*hem*	*þem, hem*
D.	*heom, him*	*hemm, þe33m*	*hem*	*hem*			*hem*	*hem*

West Midland.

	1350.	1350.	1350.	1426.	1450.
	E. E. Pr. Ps.	Allit. P.	Jos. of Ar.	Audelay.	Myrc.
N.	*hii, hij*	*þai*	*þei, heo*	*thai*	*þey*
A.	*hem*	*hem, hom*	*hem*	*hem, ham, hom*	*hem*
D.	*hem*	*hem, hom*	*hem, heom*		*hem*

The London official dialect of the thirteenth century, as shown in Henry III's Proclamation (1258), has only *heo* for Nom. Pl., and *heom* in Acc. and Dat.; Davie (1327) has still only *hij* in N. Pl.

All the London official documents of the fourteenth century have *þei, þey, they*, etc., in the Nom. In the earliest *Lond. Ch.*, for the other cases, *hem* alone is found, and even in the later documents where *þaym, thaim, þam*, etc., appear, *hem* preponderates largely (Morsbach, *Schriftspr.*, pp. 122, 123).

The language of Mandeville, Chaucer, Gower, and Wycliffe agrees in this respect with the fourteenth-century London documents; these writers all have *thei, þei, they*, etc., in the Nom., but the Scand. forms are unknown in the other cases: Acc. Dat. *hem*. Hoccleve and Lydgate (1420) have *þei, they* in Nom. but *hem* in the oblique cases; Malory (1469) has *they* in Nom., *theym*, *them* in Acc., *hem* in Dat.; Caxton (*Troye*, 1471) *they*, but *hem* more usually in Dat. Acc., though I note also *hem* in Acc. *Nut-brown Maid* (1500) and Skelton (1522) have the *th*-forms throughout. I have noted the form *'hem* as late as 1605, several times in Marston's *Eastward Hoe*.

All the Present-day dialects have *they* or some variant of it; the old *hi*, etc., has completely vanished. In the oblique cases, however, [əm], the descendant of *hem*, survives to this day in the dialects and even in Standard English. This is the form written *'em*, as though it were reduced from *them*. Down to and during the eighteenth century, this form was

a recognized form even in serious, if somewhat colloquial writing.

In good colloquial Spoken English [əm] is frequent, though perhaps becoming obsolescent among some classes of society. The loss of the initial *h* parallel to that in *it*, and the reduction of the vowel, are of course due to the unstressed position, in which alone [əm] can be used.

We may summarize the results of the above account of the Pers. Pronouns in M.E. in the following table:

	First Person.	Second Person.
N.	*ic, icc, ich, I, y*	*þū, thou, þou*
Acc. Dat.	*me*	*þe, thee, þee*

	Third Person.		
	Masc.	Fem.	Neuter.
N.	*hē, ha, a*	*heo, hi, hue, ho, ȝe, ȝhe, ȝho, sċæ, schee, sche, she, scho,* etc.	N.A. *hit, it, a*
A.	*hine, hyne, hin, him, hym*	*hi, here, her, hire, hir, er*	
D.	*him, hym*	*hire, here,* etc., *hurre*	*him*

Plural.

N. *hie, hi, hij, heo, þei, þai, þeȝȝ, they, thai,* etc.
A. *hi, heom, hem, ham, hise, his, þaim, þeim, þem, thaim, them, theym,* etc.
D. *heom, hem, hemm, ham, hom, þaim, þeim,* etc.

Possessive Pronouns

§ **302.** The O.E. Genitives, *mīn, þīn, his*, etc., were used both as real Genitives, and as purely possessive adjectives. In the former case they were often used after verbs and adjectives which in O.E. govern the Gen., e.g. *iċ com his ġeþafa* 'I consent to *it* (his)'; or *God helpe mīn* 'God help me', etc.

In the second case, some of these words (*mīn, þīn, eower, ure*) were declined in full like ordinary adjectives, agreeing in Number, Gender, and Case with the nouns before which they stood—*mid mīnum ēāgum* (Dat. Pl.) 'with my eyes'.

In M.E. the purely Genitive force is very early lost, though there are some examples of a survival of this in early texts: e.g. *þe huile he mei his wealden* 'so long as he has power over it', where *his* is the Gen. of the Neuter *hit*, governed by *wealden* 'rule, have power over, etc.' (*Owl and Nightingale*, Egerton MS., l. 55); further, *ðog ic* is *haue drogen in wo, Gen. and Ex.* 2403, 'though I have borne *it* (is) in misery'.

Azenbite has *God his aurekeþ*, p. 70, 'God will punish it'; *bote he his ne knawe*, 'unless he know it not', ibid.

The Genitives of the Pers. Prons., then, become mere Possessives, and are usually uninflected, though occasionally they take a suffix *-e*, probably on the analogy of *hire*, *here* 'her', 'their', which preserved the *e* from O.E. *e*, and *a*.

The typical M.E. forms of the possessives are as follows, though it seems unnecessary to give an exhaustive list of every possible variant:

	1st	2nd	3rd M.	3rd F.	3rd N.
Sing.	*min*	*þīn*	*his*	*hire, here*	*his*
	mi	*þi*	*hise*	*his, her*	
Pl.	*ure*	*ȝure*	*here*		
	oure	*youre*	*heore*		
		oure, etc.	*hare*		
			hor, hure, etc.		

§ 303. The First Person.

M.E. texts often—one might say generally—distinguish between *mīn* used before words beginning with vowels, and *mī* before those beginning with consonants.

In the Sth., *God Ureisun*, *Soules Warde*, *Owl and Nightingale*, and in the *Kt. Homilies*, Vesp. A. 22, the form *mĭre* occurs, probably formed from *mi-* on the analogy of *hi-re* (Fem.).

§ 304. The Second Person.

The same distinction between *þīn* and *þī* is made as between *mīn* and *mī*. *Owl and Nightingale* and *God Ur.* have a form *þĭre* (also Dat. Fem.) which may be explained on the same analogy as *mĭre*, § 303 above. Or the analogy may be the Pl. *ȝou-re*, *ou-re*.

NOTE. Parallel to *mīre*, *þīre*, *Owl and Nightingale* and *Moral Ode* have *ōre* Dat. Sing. Fem. of *ō* 'one'. The O.E. forms are *ān*, *ānre*. *Ōre* is probably a new formation from M.E. Nom. *ō* (before cons.), which was often used by Chaucer as a kind of emphatic Indef. Art., 'a single one', etc.

The Possessive Pronoun of 3rd Person Feminine.

§ 305. The O.E. form *hire* survives in M.E. as *hire*, *hyre*, in nearly all texts, and is far the commonest form. We find *here* but rarely in early texts. *St. Editha*, however, favours *herre*, but also has *hurre* and *hur*. The forms with *e* probably owe this vowel to the analogy of such a Nom. Fem. as *he*.

Hurre probably represents an older *heore*, where the diphthong may be due either to the Nom. *heo*, or to the diphthongized forms of the Pl.: *heom*, *heora*, etc. Of course M.E. forms with *u* may also represent an O.E. *hyre*.

The use of *her*(*e*) is of interest, since it is the ancestor of the Standard English form. In the West Midl. *Wil. of Pal. here* occurs, though *hire* is the commonest form, and *hure* occurs once according to Skeat (Glossary of *W. of Pal.*). *Allit. P.* seems generally to have *her* as Possess., though *hyr* otherwise; Myrc has *hyre*.

Turning to the London and Literary Dialect, the London Records have *her*(*e*) far more frequently than *hir* (Morsbach, p. 126); Gower and Chaucer have only *hir*(*e*); Capgrave (1394–1460), *hire*, *here* being rare (Dibelius, *Anglia*, xxiv. 220); Lydgate (1420), usually *her* as Possess., *hir* in the other cases; Pecock (1449), *her*; the rather illiterate Cely Papers which give a good picture of Middle Class speech (1475–88) have *here*, *hyr*, and occasionally *har* (Süssbier, p. 77); Caxton has both *here* and *hir*; Coverdale generally has *hir*, but *her* occasionally (Swearingen, p. 37); Skelton (1522) only *her*; *Edw. VI's 1st P. B.* (1547) *her* only; *Tottel's Misc.* (1557) still has *hir* as usual form, with occasional *her* (Hoelper, p. 48), and I have noted the former in *Euphues* (1581).

It appears, then, that the introduction of *her* was very gradual, and its exclusive use comparatively late. In the later period, it may have developed from *hir* by a lowering of *i* in unstressed positions. It is not easy to ascribe the form to any particular dialect area, since it appears in various districts sporadically; quite early in Kent (*Wil. of Shoreham*), in the S. West, in W. Midl., and in the non-dialectal Pecock who is supposed to represent the Oxford type of literary English. It may be noted that *hir* was a useful distinctive form for the Fem. Sing., so long as *her* was in use as the Possess. Pl. With the introduction and general use of *their*, etc., however, *her* could be used in the Sing. without ambiguity.

The Possessive Plural of the Third Person.

§ 306. The displacement of the English forms *here*, etc., by the Scandinavian *þeir*, etc., was like that of the O.E. Dat. *hem*, etc., of the Pers. Pron., a slow process in the Midlands and South. The earliest M.E. Northern texts, on the other hand, know only the *þ*-, *th*-forms of the Possessive Pl. In E. Midl., however, *Ormulum* is the only early M.E. text which has the *þ*-forms, though it still preserves the English forms as

well. None of the Sthn. or Kentish texts, none of the W. Midl., and none of the great fourteenth-century writers, Chaucer, Wycliffe, Mandeville or Gower, have any trace of *þeir, þair*, etc. The London Proclamation of Hen. III (1258) has a Gen. *her*, and this is also Davie's form. The London documents of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries utilized by Morsbach are the first texts, other than the Northern, and *Ormulum*, which make any considerable use of the *th*-forms, and they preserve *here*, etc., as well. The fifteenth-century Hoccleve and Lydgate use *her*, but Malory and Caxton have *ther, their*; the latter also *her, hir* a few times (Römstedt, p. 41). The later fifteenth-century London Charters have *here* comparatively rarely; *their*, etc., is the predominating form, and becomes more and more so with every decade (Lekebusch, p. 110). Henceforth these forms seem practically the only ones, but *Nut-brown Maid* (c. 1500) has *her* as well. As late as 1557, *Tottel's Misc.* has *her* a few times.

The following are the chief forms of the 3rd Pers. Possess. Pl. in the principal dialectal texts:

SOUTHERN.

God Ur.	Lambeth Homs.	Moral Ode.	Ancr. Riw.	Owl & Night.	Robt. of Glos.	Trevisa.	St. Ed.
hore	*hare, heore*	*heora, heore*	*hore, hare*	*eore*	*hor, here*	*here*	*hure, hurre*

KENTISH.

Vesp. A. 22.	Kt. Sermons.	Shoreham.	Ayenbite.
hare	*here, hire*	*hare*	*hare, hire*

E. MIDL.

Laud Chron.	Orm.	Gen. & Ex.	Havelok.	Robt. of Brunne.	Bokenam.
heore, here, hire	*heore, þe33re*	*here, her, hure*	*here*	*here*	*hyr, here, ther*

W. MIDL.

E. Engl. Pr. Ps.	Jos. of Ar.	Allit. P.	W. of Pal.	Myrc.	Audelay.
her	*heore, here*	*her, hor, here*	*here*		*here*

NORTHERN.

Legends.	Cursor.	N. Psalter.	Metr. Homs.	Minot.	Bruce.
	þair bar	*þair*	*thair*	*þaire*	*thair*

It seems evident from these statistics that *their* comes into Literary English through East Midland, from the North.

Declension of Nouns.

§ 307. **Gender.** English makes no distinctions of grammatical gender in nouns, but only recognizes the natural distinctions of sex. The confusion of genders which is observable in Early Transition texts (see account, §§ 284–7 above, of forms of article) was partly due to the working of analogy which levelled out distinctions in declensional types, partly to the weakening of vowels in unstressed syllables to *-e* which took place during the last quarter of the eleventh and the first quarter of the twelfth century, thus wiping out formal distinctions to a very great extent.

§ 308. **Case.** In Modern English the only case, in Nouns, distinguishable from the Nom., is the Genitive or Possessive. Of this case, only one type, that with the suffix *-s*, survives, and is used both in Sing. and Pl. This suffix is written *-'s*: *dog's tail*, *king's crown*, etc. It should be noticed that although the spelling is fixed, the actual form of the suffix, as pronounced, varies according to the character of the final sound of the Noun. After voiceless consonants the suffix is [-s] as in [kæts, ʃips], etc. After voiced consonants, and vowels, the suffix is [-z] as in [dogz teil, leidiz feiz], etc. After the open consonants [ž, ʃ, z, s̄] the suffix is [-iz] in Standard English, but often [-əz] in Provincial and Vulgar English, as in [hɔ̄siz hed, fiʃiz fin, bridžiz end], etc.

The origin of this suffix is the O.E. *-es*, a typical Genitive Singular suffix for Masc. and Neuter Nouns: *þæs cyninges sunu*, *sweordes ecg* 'the King's son, sword's edge'. This suffix in O.E. and Early M.E. was confined to Masc. and Neuter Nouns of the Strong Declensions. It was very early extended to all Genders, and to original Weak Nouns as well: *þære eorþan sċēāt* 'the bosom of the earth', becoming first **þer erþen schēt* and then *þe erþes bōsme*; Mod. Engl. *earth's*, etc.

In O.E. there were other types of strong declension, both Masc. and Fem. Thus a fairly large class are the so-called **ō-stems** like *ġiefu* 'gift' (fem.), which in the Sing. is declined as follows:

N. *ġiefu*
A. *ġiefe*
G. D. *ġiefe*

Another is that of *u*-stems which include words of all genders. The following is an example:

S.
N. *sunu* 'son'
A. *sunu*, *-a*
G. *suna*, etc.

NOTE. We should expect the Possess. of *wife*, *calf* to be [waivz, kāvz] instead of the actual [waifs, kāfs], which are new formations on analogy of Nom. We still say [kāvzhed] however, and [waivz] survived in seventeenth century, cp. spelling *wives* in Marston's *Eastward Hoe*.

The Possessive Singular in M.E.

§ **309.** These types, whose cases are not very clearly distinguished, even in O.E., suffer in M.E. the further levelling of their suffixes to *-e*, so that there is nothing to distinguish one type from another. They are, however, distinguishable from the commonest type, in that they have *-e* in the Gen. Sing. instead of *-es*.

Sporadic examples of words with *-e* in the Gen. Sing. occur throughout the M.E. period.

The Sth. and Kt. texts have such forms of Gen. Sing. as *sune*, *his uncle deth*, in the Masc. and in the Fem. *huerte loue* 'heart's love', *soule fōde* 'soul's food', *senne slepe* 'sleep of sin', *thovene mouth* 'the oven's mouth', *oure leuedi soster* 'our Lady's sister', etc.

In the E. Midl., *Gen. and Ex.* has *helle niġt* 'the night of hell', *steore name* 'star's name', but as a rule the *-es* suffix is used for Fem. nouns as well as Masc. *St. Katherine* (W. Midl.) uses *-es* (*-is*) in Gen. S. for nouns of all genders—*lefdis* 'lady's', etc. *Allit. P.* generally has *-es* in Fem. as well as Masc., but writes *honde myȝt* once.

In fourteenth-century London documents, Morsbach finds a few cases in which the suffix *-es* is omitted, or replaced by *-e* in Fem. words: *soule hēle* 'soul's welfare', *seint Katerine day* 'St. Katherine's day', *oure lādy chapell* 'our Lady's Chapel', etc. The last is the origin of the Modern *Lady Chapel*. Chaucer generally has *-es* for all genders, but omits *s* occasionally in old Fem. words: *herte* (also *hertes*), *widwe*, *cherche*, *lādy*, and once in the old Masc. *u*-stem *sune*. Caxton has a few survivals like *oure lady matins*, *atte brydge foote*, etc. He also often omits *-s* after words ending in *-s*—*Kinge Menelaus wyf*, *sir Patryse dethe*, etc. This practice is followed also by Coverdale—*Moses wife*, *righteous sake*, and is found later in the Authorized Version.

For the adverbial use of the Gen., see below under Adverbs, § 325 (3).

The Plural of Nouns.

§ **310.** In Mod. Engl. the only question we need ask concerning the declension of a Noun is, 'How does it form its Plural?'

Apart from foreign words like *seraph—seraphim*, *stigma—stigmata*, *rhinocerus—rhinoceri*, etc., which take Hebrew, Greek, and Latin Plurals respectively, whose use must be confined to the learned, the types of Plural formation in English are very few. They are the following:

A. **-s-Plurals**: *cat—cats*, etc.; B. **Weak Plurals**: *ox—oxen*; C. **Mutation Pls.**: *tooth—teeth*, etc.; D. **Invariables**: *sheep*, *deer*; E. **Irregular, Double Pls.**: *children*, etc.

§ 311. A. -s-Plurals.

These include nearly all Nouns in the language; indeed the number of each of the other types is so small that, although they include some very important words, many grammarians who deal only with English as it is consider them as 'irregular'.

The *-s*-suffix varies in pronunciation according to the same conditions which determine the form of the Possessive (§ 308, above): [kæts, dogz, le*i*d*i*z, hōs*i*z, br*i*dž*i*z], etc., etc.

There is also a class of words ending in *f* in the Nom. Sing., which take the suffix [z] and voice the [f] to [v]; e.g. *loaf—loaves* [lo*u*f—lo*u*vz, kāf—kāvz], etc. The explanation of this is that in O.E. *f*, though voiceless finally, was voiced between vowels, so that the forms were *hlāf—hlāfas*, *f* in the Pl. being pronounced [v]. In M.E. the Pl. was *lōves*, and later, when the vowel of the suffix was lost, the combination [vs] naturally became [vz]. Thus the *v*-spelling in Mod. English indicates a phonetic change which took place in O.E.

The O.E. forms of the Masc. type are:

	Sing.	Pl.
N. A.	*hām* 'home'	*hāmas*
G.	*hāmes*	*hāma*
D.	*hāme*	*hāmum*

§ 312. B. Weak Plurals.

The only surviving word of this type in common use in Standard English is *ox*, Pl. *oxen*. (*Brethren* and *children* will be considered under E, below.)

A few others survive in the Dialects, and a few such as *shoon*, *een*, are occasionally found in rather artificial literary usage.

The Weak Class was originally a very large one. In O.E. it included Masculine, Fem., and Neuter words. Examples are: Masc.—*guma* 'man', *hana* 'cock', *nefa* 'nephew', *steorra* 'star', *hunta* 'hunter', *nama* 'name', *mōna* 'moon', etc., etc.; Fem.—*eorðe*, *folde* 'earth', *heorte* 'heart', *sunne* 'sun', *swealwe*

'swallow', *bēō* 'bee', *tā* 'toe', *clife* 'cliff', *pise* 'pea', *cwĕne* 'woman'; Neuter—*eage* 'eye', *ēāre* 'ear'.

The O.E. Weak Declensions run as follows:

	Masc.		Fem.		Neuter.	
	S.	Pl.	S.	Pl.	S.	Pl.
N.	*mōna*	*mōnan*	*heorte*	*heortan*	*ēāge*	*ēāgan*
A.	*mōnan*	*mōnan*	*heortan*	*heortan*	*ēāgen*	*ēāgan*
G.	*mōnan*	*mōnena*	*heortan*	*heortena*	*ēāgan*	*ēāgena*
D.	*mōnan*	*mōnum*	*heortan*	*heortum*	*ēāgan*	*ēāgum*

In M.E. this form of declension is largely extended in the Sthn. and Kentish texts, so that many originally strong words are included, and we find Pls. like *applen*, *bischopen*, *sustren*, *bruggen* 'bridges', *dawen* 'days', *dēden* 'deeds', *heveden* 'heads', *honden* 'hands', *wingen* 'wings', etc. Original Wk. nouns preserve their ending: *churchen*, *hunten* 'hunters', *pēsen* 'peas(e)', *herten* 'hearts', *tōn* 'toes', *eyen* 'eyes', etc.

Many Latin and N. Fr. Loan-words also take *-en* in Pl.: *develen*, *diaknen* 'deacons', *mylen* 'miles', *chambren* 'chambers', *joyen* 'joys', etc.

The texts of the Sthn. and Kent. are very fond of a Wk. Gen. Pl. in *-ene*, O.E. *-ena*, which is used even with words originally strong, and which the Sthn. texts themselves otherwise regard as such. Thus *king*, Gen. S. *kinges*, D. *kinge*, N. Acc. Pl. *kinges*, Dat. *kingen* (O.E. *cyn(in)gum*), but Gen. *kingene*.

The apparent spread of the Wk. type in the Sth. may have been due to the analogy of the Dat. Pl., O.E. *-um*, M.E. *-en*. The latter would be indistinguishable from the M.E. representative of the O.E. wk. suffix *-an*. The Gen. Pl. ending *-ena* was also common in O.E. in the so-called *ō*-stem words (Fem.), which are of course a strong class—e. g. *ġ(i)efu* 'gift', Gen. Pl. *g(i)efena*. This suffix, M.E. *-ene*, occurring here as well as in the regular Wk. declension, could easily be further extended. In the same way the M.E. N. and Acc. Pl. *-en* occurred already in a large number of words, and the same suffix resulted from every Dat. Pl. in the language. Hence it was natural to use it to express the Pl. generally.

In the Midlands, the use of the *-en* Pls. was very restricted. Thus in *Gen. and Ex.* the usual Pl. is *-es*, but a few *-en* forms occur, and some are new formations: *gōren* 'spears', O.E. *gāras*; *sunen* 'sons', *wēden* 'garments', and the old wk. nouns *wunen* 'laws', *fōn* 'foes', *fēren* 'companions', etc.

In W. Midl., *Allit. P.* has *yzen* 'eyes', *trumpen* 'trumpets', and the Gen. Pls. *bēsten* 'beasts', *blonken* 'horses', as the

only forms of this class. *St. Katherine*, now generally considered to be W. Midl., confines the use of *-en* to Fem. nouns. The pre-Chaucerian London writer Davie (1307–27) has the shattered remains of the wk. Pl. in *eren*, *halewen*, *fōn*, *honden* (Dölle, p. 63).

The fourteenth-century London documents dealt with by Morsbach have an overwhelmingly large proportion of *-es* Pls., the *-en* forms being only *hosyn* 'hose', *alle Halwen* 'All Hallows' (*Schriftspr.*, p. 114). Chaucer, who has more purely Southern characteristics, has a greatly preponderating number of *-es* Pls. but also *oxen*, *foon* 'foes', *pesen*, *asshen* 'ashes', *hosen*, *been* (and *bees*) 'bees', *toon* 'toes', *yën* 'eyes', *fleen* 'flies', *sustren*, *doughtren* (and *doughtres*). Caxton's only *-en* Pls. are *shoon* 'shoes' (also *shois*), *eyen* 'eyes', *oxen*, *hosyn*. His usual form of the Pl. ends in *-es*, or *-is* (Römstedt).

Some of the Mod. Dials. use the Pls. *housen*, *primrosen*. *Chicken* is sometimes felt as a Wk. Pl. and used collectively: *to keep chicken*. Possibly the form *chick* is felt to be the Sing. of this word.

§ 313. C. Mutation Plurals.

A certain number of nouns in O.E., principally Masc. and Fem., have in their N. and Acc. Pl. a change of vowel. This change is always in the nature of fronting, and is due to the original presence of an *-i*-suffix (cp. §§ 104–9 above, on *i*-Mutation). The change occurs also in the Dat. Sing. This suffix is no longer preserved after long sylls. in O.E., though the results remain. The following are the principal words of this class:

Masculine. *fōt—fēt* 'foot', *tōþ—tēþ* 'tooth', *mann* or *monn—menn* 'man'; *frēond—frīend* 'friend'.

Feminine. *hnutu—hnyte* 'nut', *bōc—bēċ* 'book', *gāt—gǣt* 'goat', *gōs—gēs* 'goose', *mūs—mȳs* 'mouse', *lūs—lȳs* 'louse', *cū—cȳ* 'cow', *burg*, or *burh—byriġ* 'city'.

Neuter. *sċrūd—sċrȳd* 'clothing' (cp. Mod. *shroud*).

These are declined as follows:

	S.	Pl.	S.	Pl.
N. A.	*fōt*	*fēt*	*bōc*	*bēċ*
G.	*fōtes*	*fōta*	*bēċ and bōce*	*bōca*
D.	*fēt*	*fōtum*	*bēċ*	*bōcum*

Rather more than half of these mutated Pls. are preserved in Mod. Standard English; *friend*, *cow*, *nut*, *borough*, *book*, *goat*, and *shroud* have, however, succumbed to the influence of the vast class of *-s*-Pls.

NOTE. The Dative Singular does not directly concern us here, but we may note that the mutated forms hardly survive beyond Early M.E., with the exception of *byriġ* (see § 316 below). I have noted the old Dat. S. of *bōc* twice in the Kt. Gospels, as *bæċh, bēch.*

The form *fryndes* in Morsbach's fourteenth-century London documents is probably the O.E. *friend* with the additional *-es* suffix (*Schriftspr.*, p. 114).

The mutated Pl. *kye*, etc., is found in M.E. in Midl. and Nthn. texts, and in W. Midl. *Allit. P. kuy* (see § 315). It survives as *kye* [kai] in the Mod. Dial. of the North, Nth. and E. and Central Midlands, and in W. Somers. and Devon (*E. D. Gr.*, § 381).

The form *geet*, etc., is fairly common, in all dialects down to and during the fourteenth century, by the side of *gootes*, etc. It is found as late as Caxton with the spelling *gheet* (C. also uses *gootes*). Caxton has *kyen* 'cows', and the Kentish *kēne* (Römstedt, p. 38).

On the whole, M.E. and Early Mod. agree with present-day Engl. in the group of words which have mutated Pls.

§ 314. D. Unchanged or Invariable Pls.

In O.E. there is a group of Neuter Nouns which take no suffix in the N. and Acc. Pl. These are words of one syllable which has either a long vowel, or two consonants at the end: *dēor* 'beast', *sċēāp*, *sċēp* 'sheep', *swīn* 'swine', *fȳr* 'fire', *word* 'word', *bearn* 'child'. The short-syllabled words of the same class take *-u* in the N. and Acc. Pl. This *-u* is lost after a long syllable in Early O.E., hence the uninflected form of *dēor*, etc.

These invariables survive to some extent in M.E., and while many pass into the common *-es* Pl. type, there are some additions, some of which are collective nouns, and others expressive of *measure*, or *number*, etc.

Examples: *schēp* 'sheep', *deor* 'deer, beast', *folc*, *yeer*, *thing*, *hors* (Chaucer), etc.

Caxton uses *myle* 'mile' in Pl. when preceded by a numeral, also *couple*, and *pound*.

The forms *yeres*, *thinges* are found by the side of the uninflected Pls.

In present-day English *sheep* and *deer* are always invariable, while such phrases as *five mile long*, *two foot high*, *three stone ten*, are common though perhaps rather archaic. The words *dozen*, *couple*, *score* when preceded by a numeral are never inflected. Note also such phrases as a *three-year-old*, *five-pound note.*

Swine is now only used collectively—*a herd of swine*, except colloquially, as a term of abuse. Chaucer still uses *swyn* as an ordinary Pl. No doubt the analogy of *kīn* 'cows' may have helped to retain this form.

§ 315. E. Irregular Plurals.

In present-day English, the forms *children*, *brethren*, and the Provincial, or poetical form *kine* require some explanation.

Children. In O.E. the word *cīld* (neuter) is generally declined like *word* (see § 314 above) and has an invariable N. and Acc. Pl. *cīld*, but the form *ċildru* is also found. In M.E. there are two chief types of Pl.: one *chĭldre*, derived from *ċildru*, found in *Orm*, and *Gen. and Ex.* (*childere*), *Allit. P. childer*; and the other *children*, found in the Sth. and Kt., used by Chaucer and Caxton, and in present-day English. This form is of course a double Pl., since the *-r-* is itself a Pl. suffix, and to this is added the Wk. suffix *-en*. Coverdale has a Pl. Gen. *childers*, otherwise *children*. *Edward VI's First Prayer Bk.* has both forms of the Pl. in the phrase—*childers children* (Marriage Service).

Brethren. This shows mutation of the vowel as well as the addition of *-en*.

In O.E. the usual W.S. Pl. is *brōþor* and *brōþru*, but it is worth noting that the Dat. Sing. is *brēþer*. Rushworth[1] (Mercian) has N. and A. Pl. *brǣðre*, by the side of *brōðer* and *brōðre*, and Lindisfarne (Northumbr.) has also mutated forms. The declension of *brōþor* is remarkable, as it belongs to a small class of words all expressing family relationships: O.E. *fæder* 'father', *mōdor* 'mother', *dohtor* 'daughter', and *sweostor* 'sister'. *Mōdor* and *dohtor* have Dat. Sing. *mēder*, *dehter*, but no mutation in the Pl. in O.E.

In Early M.E., in the Sth. and Kt. this whole group of words take the Wk. *-en*-suffix in the Pl.: *brotheren* and *bretheren*, *sustren*, *modren*, *douȝtren*, etc.; *Gen. and Ex.* also has *brethere*; W. Midl. (*Allit. P.*), *brether*, *deȝter*; Chaucer, *bretheren*, *doughtren* (and *doughtres*), *sustren*. Caxton has *brethren*, *bredern*, *bretherne*, *brothern*. The association of *brōþer* on the one hand with the mutation Pls. was effected through the Dat. Sing., since most words which had a mutated Dat. Sing. had also mutation in N. and Acc. Pl.

The association with the *-en* Pls. could be effected if any one member of the group acquired this suffix. *Sustren* may well have been the starting-point, as it is the most consistently

used form in the Sth. As has been pointed out before, the origin of *-en* in M.E. need not in all cases have been O.E. *-an*, but it might arise from a generalization of the M.E. weakening of the Dat. Pl. suffix *-um*. When once *-en* arose in the Dat., the tendency to extend it to the other cases of the Pl. would be very strong, owing to the large group of words which already had the suffix from another source.

Apart from the group of relationship words which were associated by meaning, there were several other word—sold neuters, like *ċildru*, which had *-ru* in the Pl. in O.E., and in M.E. *-re*, and *-ren*. When once *bretheren* and the rest were established, it would be natural to regard *-ren* as a Pl. suffix and to extend it to the words which normally had *-re*. These were, among others: O.E. *ǣġ* 'egg', Pl. *ǣġru*, M.E. *ēi*, Pl. *ēire(n)*; O.E. *lamb—lambru*, M.E. *lambre*, *lambren*; O.E. *calf* 'calf'—*calfru*, M.E. *calfre* and *calvren*. Here again the Dat. Pl. *children*, *eiren*, *calfren* helped in the process. In this way, a considerable group of Pls. in *-ren* was formed.

Kine. This form is of course another example of a double Pl., showing mutation: O.E. *cȳ*, etc., + the weak *-n* suffix. The three types *kuyn*, *kīn*, *kēn* are all found fairly frequently in M.E. Chaucer has *kīn*, Caxton *kyen*, and *kēne*. The *kīn*-type may have been assured permanence by a natural association with the collective *swīn*, which was invariable (§ 314). In Standard and Literary English, *kine* is archaic, and poetical. In the Mod. Dials. it is used in the W. of Scotland, the Nth. of England, Kt., and Devon (*E. D. Gr.*, § 383).

Other dialectal double Pls. of the same kind are [gīzn, mīzn, fītn].

§ 316. **Survivals of old Datives in English.**

Meadow is an old Dat., O.E. *mǣdwe*, *mǣdewe*, etc., from Nom. Fem. *mǣd*. This word, and *Leasowe* (Chesh. Pl. N.), *leasow* (Mod. Dial.) 'meadow' from O.E. *lǣs*, Dat. *lǣswe*, belonged to the so-called *-wō*-stems, a group of Fem. words which originally took the suffix *-wō-* after the 'root'. In the O.E. Nom. all trace of this has disappeared in long-syllabled words, but the *w* survives in the oblique cases.

In M.E. the forms *medwe*, *medoue*, *leseo*, *lesoue*, etc., occur, generally used indifferently as Nom. or oblique case. The forms *mead*, and *leaze* are descended from the old Nominatives.

Bury in Pl. Ns. is from the O.E. Dat. Sing. *byriġ* from Nom. *burh*. The usual pronunciation at present, when the element is stressed, is [ber*i*] representing O.E. (Kentish) *beriġ*, but the spelling represents a M.E. type pronounced [y]. The

word *borough* is descended from the old Nom. *buruh*, with a parasitic *u* in the second syllable.

The Adjectives

Declension.

§ 317. Old English.

The Adjective in O.E. has two modes of declension—the *Strong* and the *Weak*, which correspond, on the whole, to the Strong and Weak Declensions of Nouns. Nearly all adjectives can be declined in both ways. The Strong Declension is used when adjectives occur predicatively, or attributively, without the Definite Article. The Weak Declension of Adjectives is used after the Definite Article.

O.E. adjectives distinguish Gender, and Number.

	Strong Declension.			Weak Declension.		
	Singular.			Singular.		
	M.	F.	N.	M.	F.	N.
N.	*gōd*	*gōd, blæcu*	*gōd*	N. *gōd-a*	*gōd-e*	*god-e*
A.	*gōd-ne*	*gōde*	*gōd*	A. *gōd-an*	—	—
G.	*gōd-es*	*gōd-re*	*gōd-es*	G. —	—	*gōd-an*
D.	*gōd-um*	*gōdre*	*gōd-um*	D. —	—	—
Instr.	*gōde*	—	*gōde*			
		Pl.		M.F.N. Pl.		
N. A.	*gode*	*gōd-e*	*gōd, blacu*	N. *gōdan*		
G.	—	*gōd-ra*	—	G. *gōd-ena, -ra*		
D.	—	*gōd-um*	—	D. *gōd-um*		

Note. The forms of *blæc* 'black' have been given in the two cases, N. Fem. S. and N. A. Fem. Pl., in which short-syllabled words retain the suffix *-u*, lost after long monosyllables.

The cases which differ in their suffix from those of nouns are: Sing. Acc. M., Dat. M.; G. and D. Fem.; Dat. Neuter; in the Pl.—N. and A. Masc., G. of all Genders. The suffixes *-ne, -ra, -re* are formed on the analogy of the Pronouns: *hi-ne, hi-ra, hi-re, hi-e.*

§ 318. M.E. Adjectives.

The declension of Adjectives undergoes considerable modifications in M.E. by the natural process of levelling all the vowels of the endings under *-e*.

Further, since *-an* and *-um* are both levelled under *-en*, it is impossible to tell which suffix it represents; e.g. *to þe guoden* 'to the good' Dat. Pl., *Ayenb.*, p. 72.

The Early Transition texts of the South preserve some of the strong adjectival endings, and distinguish to some extent between Strong and Weak endings.

Thus *Holy Rd. Tree* has D. Sing. Fem. *ludre*, *ðinre*, but often drops the *r* of the suffix; an Acc. Masc. *mucelne*; whereas the Dat. Pl. still preserves *-um* occasionally, by the side of *-on*, *-an*, *-a*, *-e*. The Weak forms often drop the *-n*, and a strong Gen. Pl. *haligræ* occurs where we should expect *-ena*. (See on this text Napier's admirable Introduction, p. liv.)

The Weak suffix *-en* is disappearing from the language, perhaps by weakening and losing the *-n*, so that it is indistinguishable from the Strong ending *-e*. At any rate the *-en* suffix appears not to survive the close of the twelfth century, except in Adj. used as Nouns.

The Strong endings remain, here and there, considerably later. *Godne* is found in *Lazamon*, 1388; *alnewan* in *Azenbite*; *A. R.* (Morton's text) has *godere*, Dat. Sing., p. 428, and *to godre heale*, p. 194. *Orm* has *allre nēst*, 1054. Chaucer still has a few Gen. Pls. in *-r* in his poetry—*youre aller cost*, *oure aller cok*, and the fossils *alderbest*, *alderwerst* (ten Brink, *Chaucers Spr.*, § 255). A belated *allermast* occurs in *St. Editha*.

For the Central M.E. period the ordinary suffix for attributive Adj., used without distinction of Gender, Number, and Case, is *-e*; cp. Chaucer's 'smale foules maken melodie'. This *-e* remains in poetry until, together with all other unstressed *-e*'s, it is lost towards the close of the fifteenth century. It is often omitted in prose much earlier, especially after long vowels. It was probably archaic and disused in the spoken language considerably earlier.

§ 319. French Adjectives in M.E.

French Pls. in *-s* occur in Chaucer oftener in his prose than in his verse (ten Brink, *Chaucers Spr.*, § 243). These forms occur chiefly when the Adjective is used attributively and stands after the Noun: *places delitables*, *weyes espirituels*, *goodes temporeles*. But *-s* is found also when the Adj. precedes the Noun: *in the sovereyns devynes substaunces*; and occasionally when the Adj. is used predicatively: *romances that ben royales* (rhymes with *tales*), Sir Thopas, 137.

§ 320. Comparison of Adjectives.

In O.E. the ordinary suffixes of comparison are—Comp. *-ra*; Superl. *-ost*, more rarely *-ast*, *-ust*, and still more rarely *-est*. There were in Gmc. two types of suffix: *-ōza-*, *-ōst-*; *-iza-*, *-ist-*. The latter occur in O.E. only in a few words, which are known by having *i*-mutation in the Comp. and Superl. It is not otherwise possible to distinguish the two types in

O.E., as *-ost, -est*, etc., may occur in the same word without mutation.

Examples of unmutated type:

heard—heardra, heardost
fæġer—fæġerra, fæġrost

This is the normal type, and in M.E. occurs as *hardre, hardest.*

§ 321. Examples of type with i-mutation.

There are comparatively few of these:

eald 'old'	W.S. *ieldra* non-W.S. *eldra*	*ieldest* *eldest*
grēat	W.S. *grīetra*	
ġeong	*ġingra*, Merc. *ġungra*	*ġingest* *ġungest*
long		*lenġest*
strong		*strenġest*
brād	*brædra* (generally *brād-*)	
hēah	W.S. *hīerra* non-W.S. *hērra*	W.S. *hīehst* non-W.S. *hēhst*

Comparatives are inflected weak, Superlatives nearly always weak, except in forms ending in *-ost, -est* (N.A.V. Neut.).

NOTE. In O.E. the Comp. either takes *þonne* 'than' after it, with the thing compared in the same case as that of the thing with which it is compared: *Sē wæs betera þonne ic* (Beow. 469), or omits *þonne*, and takes the Dat. of thing compared: *ne onġeat he nō hiene selfne bettran ōðrum gōdum monnum, Cura Past.*, p. 114. 23, cit. Wülfing, *Syntax*, p. 75.

In M.E. more of the mutated forms survive than in the Mod. period. Chaucer has *strenger—strengest, lenger lengest.* At the present day we retain only *elder—eldest*, and these with a specialized meaning, defining usually the place or order in a family: *the elder of the two brothers, the eldest son. Eldest* was still used with the old force in seventeenth century. *Eldest* as an ordinary comp. of *old* occurs in *Euphues England*, Arber's Reprint, p. 258. *Strenger, lenger*, are used by Sir T. Elyot (1531).

NOTE. The Comp. of *great* is generally *grĕttre, grĕtter* in M.E. (Chaucer, Caxton), with vowel shortening. Shakespeare rhymes *gretter—better* (Viëtor, *Shakesp.* 167). On the possible influence of this Comp. on the form [greɪt], see § 232, Note.

§ 322. Irregular Comparison.

Certain words form their Comp. and Superl. from a base other than that of the Positive.

	O.E.			M.E. (Chaucer).		
'good'	*gōd*	*betera* *bettra*	*betst*	*good*	*bettre*	*best*
'bad'	*yfel*	*wyrsa*	*wyrsta*	*evil*	*werse* *badder*	*werst*
'big'	*myċel* *miċel*	*māra*	*mǣst*	*muchel* *moche*	*mōre*	*moost*
'little'	*lȳtel*	*lǣssa*	*læst*	*litel*	*lăsse*	*leest*

No comment is required on these words, as we have retained the irregularities. We generally use *smaller*, *smallest*, as the Comp. and Superl. of *little*. *Less* and *least* are generally adverbs at the present time, and we usually employ a Comp. *lesser* adjectively.

§ **323**. Certain Adjectives derived from Adverbs and Prepositions are used with Comp. and Superl. forms in O.E.

'far'	*feor*	*fierra* *ferra*	*fierrest* *ferrest*
'near'	*nēāh*	*nēārra*	*niehsta* *nēhsta*
'earlier, former'	*ǣr*	*ǣrra*	*ǣrrest*
'forward'	*fore*	*furðra*	*fyrrest* 'first'

Far represents O.E. *feor*, M.E. *fer*, *far*. Chaucer's *ferre* is the Comp. of this and represents the above O.E. form. We now use *further* or *farther* for this, the former being really the Comp. formed from O.E. *forð*, used, as we see above, as Comp. of *fore*. *Farther* is on the analogy of *further*, but owes its vowel to *far*.

Near is an old Comp. of *nēāh*, and is derived from O.E. *nēārra*; it is still used, in the form *neer*, as a Comp. in Chaucer. We now feel *near* as a Positive, and have formed new Comp. and Superl. with *-er*, *-est*. The real historical Positive is *nigh*, corresponding to, though not identical with Chaucer's *ney*, from O.E. *nēh* (cp. § 171 (3 *b*) for Mod. [n*ai*]). Our word *next*, the old Superl., is quite isolated from *nigh*, *near* in form and meaning.

Erst. This is the old Superl. of *ǣr*, represented by our *ere* (Adv.). *Erst* is obsolete except in deliberate literary usage.

First. Now and in O.E. used as an Ordinal. The base is **fur-*, of which it is a normal Superl. with **-ist*. From the same base is O.E. *fore*, earlier **fura-*. The O.E. comp. *furðra* is from base *forð-*.

§ 324. Superlatives in -most.

The words *foremost*, *utmost*, *inmost*, etc., require some explanation. There is an old superlative suffix *-ma* which survives in O.E. in *for-ma* 'first' (cp. Lat. *pri-mus*) and other words indicating for the most part position or direction. *Forma* means literally 'most forward'.

In O.E. already a form *fyrmest* existed, which is a double superlative, having both suffixes, *-m-* + *-ist*. A large number of other words with the double formation exist in O.E., e.g. *sīðemest* 'last', *lætemest* 'last, latest', *innemest* 'inmost', *norðmest*, etc. The suffix *-mest* was identified with O.E. *mǣst*, *māst* 'most', and forms with *-mǣst*, rarely *-māst*, are found. In M.E. this latter normally became *-mōst*, the association with *mōst* preventing shortening. To all appearances, therefore, we get superlatives with *mōst* used as a suffix, though historically they are nothing of the kind.

The old superlative (used as an Ordinal in O.E.) *forma*, where no longer felt as such, received the normal Comp. suffix *-er* and appears as *former*, while *fyrmest* was altered to *foremost*, the first syllable being associated with *former*, the second with *mōst*, as we have seen.

Utmost stands for E. M.E. *ūtmōst*, with shortening of *ūt-* to *ŭt-* before *-m-*. *Outmost* is a new formation on the same model, from *out*.

Other new formations of the kind are *topmost*, *hindmost*.

Uppermost, *uttermost*, *outermost* have the supposed superlative suffix added to a Comp. ending *-er*. The O.E. Comp. of *ūt* was *ȳterra*, and *ūterra*. The latter becomes *utter* (§ 176).

Adverbs

§ 325. There are three main ways of forming Adverbs in O.E.

(1) By the suffix *-e* added to Adjectives: *wīde* 'widely', *sōðe* 'truly'.

(2) By the addition of an adverbial suffix—(*a*) *-līċe* 'like' = Mod. *-ly*: *sōðlīċe*, *frēondlīċe* 'friendly wise'; or (*b*) *unga*, *inga*: *ierringa* 'angrily', *eallunga* 'altogether'; or (*c*) *-lunga*, *linga*: *grundlunga*, *-linga* 'from the foundations'; (*d*) *-mælum*: *styċċemælum* 'piecemeal'; (*e*) *-rādum*: *floccrādum* 'in troops', etc.

(3) By the addition of the Genitive or Dative case ending to an adj. or noun: *ealles* 'completely', *dæġes* 'by day', and

by association with this, *nihtes* 'by night', *dearuum* 'secretly' *micclum* 'much, very'.

§ **326.** The Adverbs in *-e* are very common in O.E. and equally so in M.E.; cp. Chaucer's *Wel coude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.* With the disappearance of unstressed *-e* in the fifteenth century these adverbs become indistinguishable from adjectives, e.g. to run *fast*, to sleep *sound*, to work *hard*, etc., etc.

The *-linga* type survives in a few more or less obsolete words—*darkling*, and formerly *noseling* 'on the nose', *flatling* 'with the flat of the sword', and others were used; *lunga* survives in *headlong*, *sidelong*. *Piecemeal* has already figured above. Old Dat. Pls. survive in *seldom*, and the archaic *whilom*.

Genitives occur in *needs* 'he must needs do it', *now-a-days* (= *nū on dæge*) with an *-s* suffix as well as the old preposition, and similarly *o' nights* (= *on nihte*), *always*, *once*, etc., etc. *Twice* and *thrice* are M.E. formations—*twies*, *þries* on the analogy of *ōnes*. The O.E. forms are *twiwa*, *ðriwa*.

Once = O.E. *ānes* (see § 240, Note (2) for explanation of [wans]). Chaucer has the phrase *for the nōnes* 'for the nonce' = *for ðen ōnes*, where the adverbial *ōnes* is used as a noun.

Verbs

§ **327.** The inflexions of verbs in English express distinctions of Person, Tense, and Mood.

The inflexions of Person are chiefly confined to the Pres. Indic. and the 2nd P. Past Sing., there being no distinction made between the persons of the Pl.

The Tense endings distinguish between the Present, used also in a Future sense, the Preterite, or Past Tense. The Indic. and Subj. Moods are distinguished by different personal endings.

The most important formal distinction of verbs into classes is that made according to the mode of forming the Past Tense and Past Participle.

Those verbs which, like Mod. Engl. *follow—followed*, *laugh—laughed*, *weld—welded*, form their Past by the addition of the suffix *-ed* [d, t, *i*d] are known as *Weak*, and those which, like *ride—rode*, *sing—sang*, express the difference between Past and Present by a change in the vowel, without the addition of a suffix, as *Strong* verbs. This vowel change is known as *Gradation*. Its origins lie in the remote past, before English, or even Primitive Germanic, in the Aryan period.

The history of the forms of English verbs is partly merely that of ordinary sound change, as in O.E. *wrītan*, Pret. *wrāt*, Present-day *write—wrote*, which is covered by the general statement that O.E. [ī, ā] become Modern [*ai, ou*]. On the other hand, the principle of Analogy has fashioned the forms of Modern English Strong verbs, in some cases, to a degree which is probably in excess of its influence in other parts of speech, though, as we have seen, Analogy has indeed been active among the Pronouns and Nouns.

§ 328. **Personal and other Endings in O.E. Verbs** (cp. Sievers, *ae. Gr.*, § 352 and following sections).

PRESENT TENSE.

Indicative.		Subjunctive.		Imperative.
Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	
1. *-e* 2. *-(e)st* 3. *-(e)þ*	*-aþ*	1. 2. 3. *-e*	*-en, -on, -an*	2. Sing.—; *-e* 1. Pl. *-an* 2. Pl. *-aþ*

Infinitive.	Participle.
-an	*-ende*

PRETERITE.

Indicative.				Subjunctive.	
Sing.		Pl.		Sing.	Pl.
Strong.	Weak.	Strong.	Weak.	Str. & Wk.	Str. & Wk.
1. — 2. *-e* 3. —	*-e* *-est* *-e*	*-un, -on, -an*	*-on*	*-e*	*-en* (*on, an* wk.)

PAST PARTICIPLE.

Strong.	Weak.
-en	*-ed, -od*

NOTE 1. In W.S. texts syncope of the vowel usually takes place in the endings of the 2nd and 3rd pers. Sing. This produces the various combinations of consonants with *-st* and *-þ*, and certain changes in the consonants result: *winst, winþ* from *winnist, winniþ*; *bitst* for **bidst* from **bidist*; *bit* for **biþ* from **bidþ* from **bidiþ*; *grēt* for *grētþ* for **grētiþ*; *cīēst* for *cīēs(i)st*, also for *cīēs(i)þ*, etc., etc. In non-W.S. we get full forms *cēōseþ*, etc.

NOTE 2. Already in O.E. the 3rd Sing. Pres. Indic. appears as *-es* in Nthmb., by the side of *-eþ*, and the Pl. as *-as* by the side of older *-æþ*. The other dialects preserve the old endings. These early Nth. forms are important in the light of later developments.

NOTE 3. When the order of pronoun and verb is inverted, as often happens in O.E., instead of the endings *-aþ*, or *-on* in the Pl., the ending is *-e*: Pres. *we bindaþ*, but *binde we*; Pret. *we bundon*, but *bunde we*.

Verbal Inflexional Endings in M.E.

§ 329. Present Indicative.

The main features are preserved, allowing for the loss of distinction between *-aþ*, *-eþ*, *-on*, *-an*, *-en* which arises from the levelling of these under *-eþ*, *-en*.

There arise, however, certain characteristic modes of distribution of the endings of the Pres. Indic. in the various dialects. On the whole, these are as follows:

	Sthn. & Kt.		E. Midl.	W. Midl.	E. Midl.	W. Midl.	Nth.	
	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Sing.	Pl.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.
1.	*-e*	*-eþ*	*-e*	*-e*	*-en, -es*	*-es, -en* *-us, -un*	*-e*	*-es, -is*
2.	*-est*		*-est*	*-es, -est*			*-es*	
3.	*-eþ*		*-eþ, es*	*-es*			*-es*	

Taken together with other features, and allowing for variety of usage within a given dialect group, the forms of the 2nd and 3rd Pers. Sing., and those of the Pl., are useful tests of dialect.

The Present Indicative. A. The Singular.

The Southern dialects generally retain the old endings in the Sing. The E. Midl. on the whole agrees with this, but the N.E. Midl. (*Rob. of Brunne*, 1303) by the side of the usual *-eþ* in 3rd Sing. has also *-s*, especially in rhymes, e.g.:

> þe holy man *telleþ* vs and *seys*
> þat þe lofe made euen *peys*.

The W. Midl., owing no doubt to Nthn. influence, frequently has *-s* in 2nd and 3rd. In the Nth. *-s* is universal in 2nd and 3rd Sing.

Note. *Wil. of Pal.* has *-es*, *-us* and *-eþ*, *-uþ* in 3rd S. about equally (Schüddekopf, p. 74). The late *Audelay* has *-is*, *-ys*, *-s* most frequently, but also a fair number of examples of *-eth*, *-yth*, *-uth* (Rasmussen, p. 82).

In the London Dialect, and Literary English the *-s* type gained ground but slowly. The earliest London documents to first quarter of fourteenth century have only *-eþ* (Dölle, p. 72); the later fourteenth-century documents have only *-iþ*, *-ith*, *-eþ*, *-eth*, except for one Nth. *-s* form (Morsbach, *Schriftspr.*, pp. 134, 136, 137); Chaucer with one exception in rhyme, *telles—elles*, has only *-eth*, *-ith*, in Verse and in Prose (ten Brink, § 185; Frieshammer, p. 95); the fifteenth-century London Charters, etc., have an enormous preponderance of *-ith*-forms, but about three examples of *-es* (Leke-

busch, pp. 121 and 123); Caxton has only *-eth*, or *-ith* (Römstedt, p. 45).

The Oxford writers, Wycliffe and Pecock, employ only *-th*, but Lydgate has frequent *-es* forms, while Capgrave has only one (Dibelius, *Anglia*, xxiv, p. 247). In the sixteenth century the *-es*-forms become gradually more common, especially in poetry. Down to 1580 or so, *-th* is almost exclusively used in Prose, and the *-es* forms seem to have come into the literary language, largely through the poets, who use them for the convenience of rhyme, and to have passed thence into prose (Hoelper, pp. 54–7). These Nthn. forms probably came into literary English from E. Midl. They are fairly frequent in the Paston Letters, and as we have seen, in Lydgate (Dibelius, loc. cit.). In W. Midl., however, they are common much earlier, and occurred also, occasionally, early in fourteenth century in E. Midl.

The Present Indicative. B. The Plural.

The Sthn. dialects preserve the O.E. *-aþ*, in the weakened form *-eþ*. While the typical Midland ending is *-en*, from the Subj., later weakened to *-e*, W. Midl. texts, by the side of this ending, and the typical *-un*, very frequently use the Nthn. *-s* (*-es, us*). Nthn. dialects have regularly *-s*, which as we saw in § 328, Note 2, is found already in O. Northumb.

It is interesting to observe the encroachment of the Midl. type in the London dialect, and the gradual elimination of the Sthn. *-eþ* form. The earliest Charters have *-aþ*, *-eþ*, but Henry III's Procl. (1258), while still retaining *-eþ* in *habbeþ*, *beoþ*, shows already a preponderance of the Midl. *-en* forms: *willen*, *hoaten*, *senden*, *beon* (twice). Davie (1327) has only one example of *-eþ*. In Morsbach's fourteenth-century documents, Sthn. *-eth* still lingers occasionally, but Midl. *-en*, or *-e* are very much commoner (*Schriftspr.*, pp. 134, 136, 137); Chaucer's Prose has *-en* oftener than *-e*. In rhymes, *-e* is nearly universal, *-en* rare. Frieshammer (p. 96) mentions only four examples of *-th* Pls. Pecock and Caxton have *-en*. The late London Charters, etc., have most often *-en*, or, after a vowel, *-n*; by the side of this, but considerably less often, *-e*; *-eth* is found rather more than twenty times, and once *-ith*; *-es* occurs twice. A certain number of forms without any ending are used, but these are not very frequent (Lekebusch, p. 124).

Shakespeare has 'and wax*en* in their mirth' (cit. Morris's *Hist. Outlines*, ed. Kellner-Bradley, p. 257), where the suffix is obviously used for the sake of the metre. Ben Jonson, writing 1640, says that the suffix *-en* was used in the Pl.

'till about the reign of Henry VIII', but adds that 'now it hath quite grown out of use' (cit. Kellner-Bradley, p. 257, footnote). Professor H. R. Case has been good enough to supply me with fairly numerous examples of the Northern *-s* Plurals in the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These seem to be more frequent, though of course scattered, in the seventeenth than in the preceding century, and must be due to the Scottish influence of the Court. Professor Case gave instances of these forms both from Prose and Poetry, in the works of Churchill, Marston, Davenant, and other writers.

§ 330. The Preterite.

In O.E., whereas the 2nd Person Sing. of Weak Verbs had the suffix *-est*, like the Present, Strong Vbs., on the other hand, had only *-e* in this Pers. The vowel of the base is different from that of the 1st and 3rd Pers. in O.E. and M.E. So long as this distinction was preserved by the Strong Vbs. the ending remains unchanged, but later, when the vowel of the 2nd Pers. is levelled under that of the other Sing. forms, this Pers. takes *-est* on the analogy of the Present.

Chaucer preserves the old distinction of vowel in the 2nd Sing. Pret. only in verbs of the *sing*, *find*-type, and not always here. He often has such forms as *thou founde*. He also has forms without *-est* in vbs. whose vowel in 2nd Pret. has been levelled under that of 1st and 2nd Pers.—*thou drank*. On the other hand, forms like *begonnest* are also found (ten Brink, § 193).

Caxton habitually inflects the 2nd Pret. Sing. with *-est*, *-ist*, both in Wk. and Strong Vbs., but exceptionally has *thou took*, *had*, *fond*, *gate*, *sawe*, *knewe* (Römstedt, p. 37; Price, p. 188). In Wycliffe, Bokenam, Pecock, and Capgrave, the *-est* forms greatly predominate, though the old forms are also found (Dibelius, *Anglia*, xxiv, p. 256). Price, p. 188, gives examples of the uninflected forms from Shakespeare and Heywood.

§ 331. The Present Participle in M.E. and afterwards.

In a general way, the form of the Pres. Part. is a useful indication of dialect in M.E., but it must not be relied upon absolutely, without considering the other dialectal features of a text. The Sthn. and Kentish texts have *-inde*, the Midland generally *-ende*, and the Nthn. always *-and*. The more Northerly portions of E. Midl. dialect, however, e.g. as seen in *R. of Brunne* (Lincolnshire), have *-and* after the Nthn. use,

and the Sthn. Midl. has *-inde* according to the Sthn. dialect. The West Midl. texts have very commonly *-and*, except *Jos. of Ar.*, which has habitually *-inde*.

By the side of these forms, a new type of Pres. Part. comes into use, first in the Sth. during the M.E. period, one in *-inge*. The origin of this is uncertain. It is first used in the Sth., and is the ancestor of the Present-day form.

Kellner-Bradley, p. 263, mention *ridinge* in *Lazamon*, used in the same sentence with the older and more usual *goinde*. *Handlyng Synne* has already a fair number of forms in *-yng*, but otherwise the Nthn. type *-and*, especially in rhymes. The Sthn. Trevisa, according to Morris, Introd. to *Azenbite*, p. lxiv, has always *-inge*, *-ing*, never *-inde*. The Kentish *Azenbite* has only *-inde*, *-ynde*. In W. Midl., *Earliest Engl. Pr. Ps.* has generally *-and*, but also *in keping hem*; *Jos. of Ar.* several forms in *-inge*, by the side of *-inde*; *Allit. P.* *-ande*; *Wil. of Pal.* *-and* thirteen times, Midl. *-end* twelve, and *-ing* ten times (Schüddekopf, p. 75); *Audelay* has almost exclusively *-ing*, twice *-and* in rhyme, and once *-and* in the middle of a line (Rasmussen, p. 82).

The earliest London documents have *-inde* in Procl., but Davie only *-ing* (Dölle, p. 73); Chaucer's Prose *-ing(e)*, rarely *-enge* (Frieshammer, p. 97); Morsbach's Charters, etc., only *-yng(e)* (*Schriftspr.*, pp. 175, etc.); the later Charters have only *-yng*, *-ing*, or *-eng* (Lekebusch, pp. 122, 123, 125).

It is worth noting that Chaucer's contemporary Gower very rarely uses the *-ing(e)* form, but almost invariably *-ende*, with the accent upon this suffix (Macaulay's Introd. to the small ed. *Conf. Amant.*, p. xliv).

The Weak Verbs

§ 332. It should be noted that the distinguishing feature of a weak verb is that it has the ending *-ed*, *-t* in the Past Tense. Some weak verbs show a change of vowel, as *teach—taught*, O.E. *tǣcan—tāhte*, where one form has *i*-mutation, and the other has not (§ 106); others show a change of vowel due to gradation, *bring—brought*.

Classes of Weak Verbs.

There are originally three classes of Weak Verbs:

(1) Those in *-*jan* which have *i*-mutation whenever the original vowel is a back.

(*a*) When the original vowel of the base is short, the following consonant, other than *r*, is doubled in the Inf., in

all forms of the Present except the 2nd and 3rd Pers. Sing. and the 2nd Imperat.

Examples:

Inf.	Pret.	P.P.	
nerian 'save'	*nerede*	(*ġe*)-*nered*	from **nazjan*, etc.
temman 'tame'	*temede*	(*ġe*)-*temed*	from **tammjan*
cnyssan 'strike'	*cnyssede*	(*ġe*)-*cnyssed*	from **knussjan*
settan 'set'	*sette*	(*ġe*)-*seted*	from **sattjan*

(*b*) When the vowel, or syllable of the base is long, no doubling of the consonant takes place. The Pret. ending is usually *-de*, earlier *-ida*, the *-i-* having been syncopated, except after *-r*, and often *l*.

Examples:

Inf.	Pret.	P.P.	
dēman 'judge'	*dēmde*	(*ġe*)-*dēmed*	from **dōmjan*
frēfrān 'comfort'	*frēfrede*	(*ġe*)-*frēfred*	from **frofrjan*
dǣlan 'divide'	*dǣlde*	(*ġe*)-*dǣled*	from **dāljan*
(W.S.) *hīēran* 'hear'	*hīērde*	(*ġe*)-*hīēred*	from **hēarjan*

(2) *-ōjan* Verbs. This suffix appears in O.E. as *-ian*, having passed through *-ējan*, *ījan*, and then being shortened to *-ian*. The bases of these verbs have no mutation. The Pres. Indic. Sing. normally runs *lōciġe*, *locast*, *lōcaþ*. The Pret. ends in *-ode*, and the P.P. in *-od*.

Examples:

Inf.	Pret.	P.P.	
lōcian	*lōcode*	(*ġe*)-*lōcod*	from **lōkōjan*
hālgian	*hālgode*	(*ġe*)-*hālgod*	from **hāl(a)gōjan*
þancian 'thank'	*þancode*	(*ġe*)-*þancod*	from **þankōjan*
wilnian 'desire'	*wilnode*	(*ġe*)-*wilnod*	from **wilnōjan*

(3) *So-called -e-Verbs.*

These verbs, whose formation offers some difficulties, are those in which the suffix *-ja-* interchanges with Gmc. *-ai-*, or *-æ-* in the various forms. The Inf. and Pres. Indic. 1st Pers. Sing., and the Pres. Indic. Pl. have doubling of the consonant, and *j*-mutation of preceding vowel in these forms; the suffix of the Pret. is added to the base directly, without any intervening vowel.

Examples:

	Inf.	Pret.	P.P.
	hæbban 'have'	*hæfde*	(*ġe*)-*hæfd*
1st	*hæbbe*		
2nd	*hafast* / *hæfst*		
3rd	*hafaþ* / *hæfþ*		
Pl.	*habbaþ*		
	libban (*lifian*)	*lifde* (also *leofode* like *-ōjan* vb.)	*ġelifd*
1st	*libbe* (*lifiġe*)		
2nd	*leofast* (*liofast*)		
3rd	*leofaþ* (*liofaþ*)		
Pl.	*libban* (*leofaþ*, *liofaþ*)		
1st	*seċġan* 'tell, say'	*sæġde*	(*ġe*)-*sæġd*)
2nd	*sagast* (*sæġst* W.S.)		
3rd	*sagaþ* (*sæġþ* W.S.)		
Pl.	*seċġ*(*e*)*aþ*		

NOTE 1. The difference between *temman* from **tammjan* and *temede* from **tamida* is due to the interchange of *-ja-* and *-i-* in the suffix. Before *-j-* a consonant is doubled, but not before *-i-*.

NOTE 2. In *dǣlan* from **dāljan* the double consonant has been simplified after a long vowel.

NOTE 3. The *bb* in *hæbban* is from **-ƀj-*. The *æ* in this form and in *hæbbe* is the *j*-mutation of *a*. **Haƀjan*<**hæbbjan*, which would become **hebban*. *Hæbban* is a new formation **habbjan*, on the analogy of **haƀ-as*, **haƀaþ* 2nd and 3rd Pers. Sing. Cp. also § 107 Note.

Irregular Weak Verbs.

§ 333. There is a certain number of verbs which have *-ja-* in the Inf. and Pres. (all except *bringan*), but which have often lost the *-i-* of the stem, before the suffix *-de* in the Pret. and P.P. Many of these survive to the present time. The combination of the Pret. suffix with the final consonant of the base often brings about considerable changes in the latter.

Inf.	Pret.	P.P.
sellan 'give, sell'	*scalde* (Angl. *sālde*)	*ġeseald* (Angl. *sāld*)
tellan 'tell, count'	*tealde* (Angl. *tālde*)	*ġeteald* (Angl. *tāld*)
settan 'set, place'	*sette*	*ġeset*(*t*)
leċġ(*e*)*an* 'lay'	*leġde*	*ġeleġd*
byċġan 'buy'	*bohte*	*ġeboht*
reċċ(*e*)*an* 'narrate'	*reahte*	*ġereaht*
streċċ(*e*)*an* 'stretch'	*streahte*	*ġestreaht*
þeċċ(*e*)*an* 'cover'	*þeahte*	*ġeþeaht*
lǣċ(*e*)*an* 'seize'	*lǣhte*	*ġelǣht*
rǣċ(*e*)*an* 'reach'	*rǣhte* / *rāhte*	*ġerǣht*
tǣċ(*e*)*an* 'teach'	*tǣhte* / *tāhte*	*ġetǣht*, *ġetāht*

Infin.	Pret.	P. P.
reċċ(e)an 'reck'	*rōhte*	—
sēċ(e)an 'seek'	*sōhte*	*ġesōht*
þenċ(e)an 'think'	*þōhte*	*ġeþōht*
þynċ(e)an 'seem'	*þūhte*	*ġeþūht*
wyrċ(e)an 'work'	*worhte*	*ġeworht*
bringan	*brōhte*	*ġebrōht*

NOTES 1. *sellan, tellan* have mutation of æ (§ 107), but Fracture of æ in Pret. (§ 102). The Sthn. and Kt. representative of *sealde* in M.E. is *sēlde*. *sōlde* and Mod. *sold* are from Anglian *sālde* (§§ 126, 164, 165).

2. *sette* is from **satda*, **satta*, and owes its *e* to the Pres. ; *leġde* is also an analogous form.

3. *byċġan* is from **bug-jan* (§ 109) ; *bohte* from **buχ-ta*, with change of *u* to *o* before *a* in next syllable.

4. *reċċan—reahte* and all the verbs which have *ċċ* or *ċ* in Inf. and Pres. and *-ht-* in Pret. illustrate the Gmc. and O.E. change of *kt* to *ht* : **răkjan* <*reċċan* ; **rakda*<**rakta*<**rahta*<**ræhtæ*<*reahte*. This form, as well as *streahte, þeahte,* has Fracture (§ 102).

5. The normal Prets. of *tæċan, ræċan,* are *tāhte, rāhte,* from **taikta*, etc. There is nothing to cause mutation here, and the by-forms *tæhte, ræhte* owe their vowel to the analogy of the Pres. and Inf.

6. On the changes in *sēċan, þenċan, þynċan, wyrċan* and their Prets., cp. §§ 105, 109 and Note, 108, 113.

7. *bringan—brōhte* show a gradational change **briŋ-* —**braŋχ-*, comparable to *sing—sang*, but **braŋχ-* instead of **braŋ-* is rather a puzzle. We must assume a primitive **braŋχ-*, otherwise the suffix *-te* in O.E., and in O.H.G. *brāhta*, cannot be accounted for. Perhaps the analogy of **þaŋχ-ta* (O.E. *þōhte*) may have produced *braŋχ-ta*, or again the existence of the pairs **faŋ-* —*faŋχ-*, **haŋ-* —**haŋχ-* (cp. § 98) may have helped to form **braŋχ-* by the side of **braŋ-*. The latter survives in O.E. *brenġan* from **braŋ-jan*.

Weak Verbs in M.E.

§ **334.** The points to be considered are the treatment of the Inf., the Pret., and the Past Part.

In the Nth. and Midlands the *-jan* vbs. with long first sylls. and *-an* classes, are practically both levelled under one class, in *-e(n)*. Thus O.E. *dēman—dēmde* becomes *dēme(n)—dēmde* ; *have(n)—havde* or *hadde*.

The *-ōjan* class, on the other hand, while losing, except in the Sth. and Kent, the *-i-* in Inf., and Pres. Indic. 1st S., retains the vowel *e* before the ending of the Pret. Thus O.E. *lōcian—lōcode* becomes *lōke(n)—lōked(e)*. The *-jan* vbs. with short first sylls., whether of the O.E. *werian*, or *temman* type, appear in M.E. as *wĕre(n)*, *temma(n)* respectively, but retain the *-e-* before the *-de* in Pret.—*wĕred(e)*, *temed(e)*, being thus levelled under the *lōcian* type, since *-ode, -ede* both appear as *-ed(e)* in M.E.

Thus from the point of view of the Pret. there are two classes, one which has the suffix *-de*, or *-te* added to the base direct, and the other which has *-e-* between the base, and the *-de* suffix. The Inf. and Pres. Indic., however, show only one type: *hăue*, *lōke*, *măke*, *wĕre*, *hēre*, *dēme*, etc.

§ 335. A further confusion involving the Pret. also arises in later M.E. Forms like *axede*, *werede*, *wunede*, *luvede* lose the final *-e* and appear as *wered*, *luved*, *axed*, etc., though often written full, the loss being proved by the metre in poetry. This gives two types of Pret.—*dēmde*, *hērde*, but *luved*, *axed*, etc. Now a cross analogy works between the two types, so that we get *dēmed* on the analogy of *luved*, but also *luvde*, on the analogy of *dēmde*. The result is that poets often use both forms of Pret. for the same word, *luved(e)* or *luv(e)de*, *cry(e)de*, or *cryed(e)*, *clēped* or *clepte*, etc., etc. In a general way, however, one or other of these forms must be used—either *clēped* with loss of final *-e*, or *clepte* with loss of medial *-e-*. Such a form as *clepede* (three sylls.), if it occur, must be regarded as a new formation from a blending of both types. In the Pl. the forms which do not syncopate the medial vowel lose the suffix *-en*, such forms as *yelleden*, *strēmeden* being rare, and of course, like similar forms in the Sing., the result of blending (cp. ten Brink, *Ch. Spr.*, § 194).

The O.E. -ian Vbs. in Sthn. and Kentish in M.E.

§ 336. This type is very common indeed in the Sth. and Kt., and originally obtained in the London dialect, though it disappears through the encroachment of the Midl. tendencies in the fourteenth century. Before this, such Infinitives as *ġeþanian*, *werien*, *makien*, *tholie* are found (Dölle, pp. 72 and 73). In fourteenth-century Kentish (*Ayenbite*) the typical ending is *-ie*, *-ye*, or *-y*: *louie*, *louye*, *louy*; *māki*, *māky* 'make'; *hātye*, *hātie* 'hate'; *þolie*, *þolye* 'suffer'; *lōki*, *lōky* 'look'; *ponki*, *ponky* 'thank', etc. Many foreign verbs also have this ending: *troubli*, *excusi*, *stonchi* 'to staunch', etc., etc.

STRONG VERBS

Old English Period.

§ 337. These are divided into six classes, according to the vowel series represented in the forms. The forms which show the various gradation vowels are (1) Inf., (2) Pret. S., (3) Pret. Pl., (4) P.P. The type of the Inf. occurs also in

Pres. Indic., Imperat., and Subj. The vowel of the Pret. Sing. occurs in 1st and 3rd Pers. of that; that of Pret. Pl. occurs also in 2nd Pers. of Pret. Sing., and in Pret. Subj. S. and Pl. The vowel of P.P. sometimes agrees with that of Pret. Pl., but in other classes is an independent vowel, not found in any other form of the verb.

§ 338. Class I.

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
bītan 'bite'	*bāt*	*biton*	(*ġe*)-*biten*
drīfan 'drive'	*drāf*	*drifon*	*drifen*
ġewītan 'depart'	*ġewāt*	*ġewiton*	*ġewiten*
rīdan 'ride'	*rād*	*ridon*	*riden*

So also *slīdan* 'slide', *snīþan* 'cut', *bīdan* 'wait, bide', and several others.

§ 339. Class II.

bēodan 'announce'	*bēad*	*budon*	*boden*
sēoþan 'boil'	*sēaþ*	*sudon*	*soden*
ġēotan 'pour'	*ġēat*	*guton*	*goten*
flēogan 'flee'	*flēah*	*flugon*	*flogen*

So also *ċēosan* 'choose', *hrēowan* 'have pity, rue', *clēofan* 'cleave, split', *sċēotan* 'shoot', etc.

NOTE. *dūfan* 'dive', *sċūfan* 'thrust', *brūcan* 'enjoy, use', *lūcan* 'lock', belong to this Class. The *ū* may go back to Idg. *ēu*.

§ 340. **Class III.** The original series in this class was Gmc. *e, a, u, u.* In West Gmc. and O.E. various combinative changes affect these vowels, according to the consonants which follow.

Group (*a*). **Verbs whose base ends in nasal + another consonant:**

bindan 'bind'	{ *band* / *bond* }	*bundon*	*bunden*
findan	*fand*	*fundon*	*funden*, etc.

So also *cringan* 'double up, fall', *grindan* 'grind', *windan* 'wind', *ġelimpan* 'happen', *climban* 'climb'.

Group (*b*). **Verbs whose base ends in 1 + consonant:**

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
helpan	*healp*	*hulpon*	*holpen*
meltan	*mealt*	*multon*	*molten*

So also *sweltan* 'die', *delfan* 'delve, dig', *swelgan* 'swallow', etc.

Group (*c*). **Verbs whose base ends in r, or h + consonant:**

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
weorþan 'hurl'	*wearþ*	*wurþon*	*worþen*
ċeorfan 'carve'	*ċearf*	*curfon*	*corfen*

Also *weorþan* 'become', *hweorfan* 'turn, go', *steorfan* 'starve', in sense of 'die', *beorgan* 'protect', *beorcan* 'bark'.

feohtan 'fight'	*feaht*	*fuhton*	*fohten*

Group (*d*). The following verbs either show the vowel series unchanged, or slightly modified by Fracture, or early change of *u* to *o*:

breġdan 'draw, brandish' a sword	*bræġd*	*brugdon*	*brogden*
berstan 'burst'	*bærst*	*burston*	*borsten*
friġnan 'ask, find out'	*frægn*	*frugnon*	*frugnen*
spurnan	*spearn*	*spurnon*	*spornen*

NOTE. *Spurnan* owes its vowel perhaps to the Pret. Pl. *Friġnan* may owe its *i* to the analogy of *friċġ(e)an* 'ask', from same base = **frigjan*.

§ 341. Class IV.

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
beran 'bear'	*bǣr*	*bǣron*	*boren*
brecan 'break'	*brǣc*	*brǣcon*	*brocen*
stelan 'steal'	*stǣl*	*stǣlon*	*stolen*

Also *cwelan* 'kill', *helan* 'conceal'.

NOTE 1. *Niman* 'take', *nōm*, *nōmon*, *numen*, and *cuman*, *c(w)ōm*, *c(w)ōmon*, *cumen* are only irregular in appearance. *Nim-* instead of **nem-* is due to the influence of *m*. *Cum-*, *num-* in P.P. are also due to change of *o* to *u* before *m*. The type *cum-* of 1st Pers. Pres. Indic. and Inf. is from earlier **cwuman* from **cweoman* from *cwiman*. Cp. Goth. *qiman*, and § 110 and Note. *Nōm*, *c(w)ōm*, instead of *nǣm*, etc., are due to the analogy of the Pl. where *ō* is regular before a nasal (§ 99). We also get Pl. *nāmon* and Sing. *nǣm* (W.S. and Kt.).

NOTE 2. In non-W.S. these vbs. have of course *ē* in Pret. Pl. (§ 123).

§ 342. Class V.

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
cweþan 'speak, say'	*cwæþ*	*cwǣdon*	*cweden*
sprecan	*spræc*	*sprǣcon*	*sprecen* (Late O.E. *spec-*, etc.)
tredan	*træd*	*trǣdon*	*treden*

W.S. *ġiefan* 'give', *on-*, *be-*, *-ġietan* 'perceive, obtain', etc., have the forms:

ġiefan	*ġeaf*	*ġēafon*	*ġiefen*
ġietan	*ġeat*	*ġēaton*	*ġieten*

The non-W.S. dialects have no diphthongization, and there-

fore *ġefan, ġæf, ġēfon, ġefen,* etc. (§§ 115, 120, 123). The following belong to this class:

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
sēon 'see'	*seah*	*sāwon*	*sewen* and *sāwen*
ġefēon 'rejoice'	*ġefeah*	*ġefǣgon*	—

sēon from **sehwan* (§§ 102, 112), *seah* from **sæh*, *sāwon* from **sǣwum* (cp. § 99 (*b*); *sāwen* formed on the analogy of Pret. Pl.

bidden 'pray', *sittan* 'sit', *liċġean* 'lie down', are peculiar as forming the Inf. and 1st Pers. Pres. Indic. with a *-ja-* stem. This is responsible for *i* instead of *e* (W. Gmc. change) and also for the double consonants and *ċġ*: *biddan* from **beddjan*, *sittan* from **settjan*, *liċġan* from **legjan*. Gothic has *bidjan* where *i* for *e* is a characteristic isolative change. In other respects these verbs are quite regular: *sittan, sæt, sǣton, seten.*

§ 343. Class VI.

faran 'go'	*fōr*	*fōron*	*faren*
bacan 'bake'	*bōc*	*bōcon*	*bacen*

So also *wasċan* 'wash', *galan* 'sing', *hladan* 'lade', *wadan* 'go, pierce', etc., etc.

sċeacan 'shake'	*sċ(e)ōc*	*sċ(e)ōcon*	*sċeacen*

owes its diphthong to a late tendency which affected back vowels.

standan	*stōd*	*stōdon*	*standen*
sleān 'strike'	*slōg*	*slōgon*	*slagen, sleġen* (cp. § 107 on p.p. of *sleān*)
þwēan 'wash'	*þwōg*	*þwōgon*	

These verbs have Fracture, loss of *h* and contraction in Inf. (§ 112).

A certain number of verbs of this class form Inf. and Pres. with *-j-*: *sċeppan* 'injure' from **skaþþjan*, *swerian* 'swear', *steppan* 'proceed', *hliehhan* 'laugh', etc.

These have mutated vowels and double consonants in the forms mentioned, but are otherwise normal:

steppan	*stōp*	*stōpon*	*stapen*, etc.

Reduplicating Verbs

§ 344. A few verbs in O.E. retain signs of reduplication in Pret. The reduplicated forms are chiefly used in poetry, though *heht* occurs by the side of *hēt* in prose.

hātan 'order'	*hēht*	cp. Goth.	*haiháit*
rǣdan 'advise'	*reord*	„	*raíróþ*
lācan 'play'	*leolc*	„	*lailáik*
lǣtan 'let'	*leort*	„	*laílōt*

§ 345. The following verbs have assimilated the reduplicated syllables:

Inf.	Pret. S.	Pret. Pl.	P.P.
fōn 'catch, take'	*fēng*	*fēngon*	*fangen*
hōn 'hang'	*hēng*	*hēngon*	*hangen*
fēallan 'fall'	*fēoll*	*fēollon*	*fēallen*
hlēapan 'leaf'	*hlēop*	*hlēopon*	*hlēapen*

NOTE. For explanation of *hōn*, *fōn*, and *fēhþ*, etc., cp. §§ 98, 112, 105, 346.

Mutation of 2nd and 3rd Pers. Sing. in Strong Verbs.

§ 346. As the usual suffixes of these Pers. are *-is(t)*, *-iþ*, the preceding vowel if back, or a diphthong, is fronted: *ċēōse—ċīēsþ*, *cume—cymþ*, *fō—fēhþ*; if *e* it is raised to *i*: *cwepe—cwiþ*, *helpe—hilp(e)þ*, *ġiefe—ġifþ*, etc.

NOTES ON POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE VERB IN O.E.

(1) The prefix *ġe-* (unstressed), generally used in the P.P. in O.E., without modification of meaning, is found in Gothic in the form *ga-* and in O.H.G. as *gi-*. It becomes *ȝe-* and simply *i-* in Transition and Early Middle English. It disappears altogether in the Nth. in M.E., and to a great extent in Midland, but survives longer in the South.

The survival of *i-* in the fourteenth-century dialect of London (Davie and Chaucer) must be regarded as one of the Southern features of that dialect. The prefix *ġe-* is also used in O.E. with all parts of Verbs with the function of making intransitive verbs transitive, e.g. *sittan* 'sit', but *ġesittan* 'occupy, take possession of', etc.; *gān* 'go, walk', but *ġegān*, 'overrun, take' (a country, etc.).

Verner's Law.

(2) An interchange between *h* and *g*, *þ* and *d*, often appears in O.E. Strong Verbs. This has primarily nothing to do with verbs as such, but is merely an illustration of a general principle of Sound Change which was active in Primitive Germanic, and it may appear in any class of words where the necessary conditions are present. It should be remembered that *g* and *d* stand for sounds which were originally voiced open consonants [ɣ, ð] and not stops. The change therefore of *h* to *g*, *þ* to *d* is simply one of voicing to start with, the original sounds being [χ, þ]. These represent Aryan *k*, *t*, which by the so-called *Second Sound Shift* are merely opened in Gmc. In positions other than initially (where χ, þ,

always remain), these sounds are voiced in Gmc. *when the accent in Aryan and Early Gmc. fell on any other syllable than that immediately preceding the* χ *or* þ. Thus O.E. *weorþan* from **werþan* from Aryan **wért-*, but O.E. *wurdon*, Gmc. **wurđúm*, Aryan **wr̥túm*. Similarly O.E. *fæder*, Gmc. **fađér*, Aryan **pətér*, which used to be regarded as an 'exception to Grimm's Law', is satisfactorily explained from the position of the primitive accent which still survives in Gk. πατήρ. This far-reaching law is called after the name of its discoverer, Karl Verner, who formulated it in 1877 in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, vol. xxiii, pp. 97–130. Under the same conditions primitive *s* was voiced to *z* which usually appears in W.Gmc. as *r*—O.E. *wæs* but *wæron*, *ċēōs-an* but *cur-on*, etc.

The Strong Verbs in M.E. and Later Periods

§ **347.** The changes in the forms of Strong Verbs since the O.E. period have been determined partly by normal sound change, partly by the action of analogy working in various ways. The results of the latter factor have been (*a*) the levelling out of what proved to be an unnecessary variety of forms, and the reduction under fewer gradation-types; (*b*) the transference of verbs from one class to another.

These points may be briefly illustrated.

Normal Sound Change since O.E. Period.

§ **348.** The series of vowels found in Cl. I in O.E. *ī, ā, ĭ, ĭ*: *rīdan—rād—ridon—riden*, etc., became in M.E. *ī, ō, ĭ, ĭ* by the change of *ā* to *ō* which took place in the Sth. and Midlands. In the Mod. Period a further set of changes made the series into [*ai, ou, i*] giving the Present-day [*raid—roud—ridn*]. Again, Cl. IV, which in O.E. had short vowels in all forms except the Pret. Pl.: *brĕcan—bræc-, brǣcon—brŏcen*, developed in M.E. —apart from other changes—long vowels in all forms except the Pret. Sing., through the M.E. process of lengthening which affected the short vowels of open syllables, thus giving *brēken—brăk* (also *brāk*)*—brēken* (also *brāken*)*—brōken*.

Levelling of Pret. Pl. under type of Singular (Northern Preterite).

§ **349.** This mode of levelling is an early characteristic of the Northern dialects, and in the Nthn. Homilies, and *Cursor Mundi*, etc., we find Pret. Pls. such as *faand, dranc, bigan, rāde* (O.E. *rād*), *sagh* (O.E. *sæh* 'saw'), etc. This type of

Pret. spread later to the London literary dialect, and to it we owe our forms *sang, drank, forbade* = [-bæd], etc.

In M.E. this mode of reduction is an important sign of Northern origin, or at least Nthn. influence, when found in a doubtful text. It is referred to by German writers as *nördlicher Ausgleich*, and we may call such Prets. *Northern Preterites*.

Levelling of Preterite under type of Past Participle (Western Preterite).

§ 350. While the dialects of the Sth. and Midlands preserve, on the whole, the distinction between the Singular and Plural of the Pret., where this existed in O.E., with fair completeness during the whole M.E. and into the Modern Period, a tendency exists, especially among writers of the South-West, and the Southerly West Midlands, to use the P.P. type in the Pret. as well. *Gun, bygun, flow, fought, bounde*, which occur severally in *Lazamon, S. Marharete, Rob. of Glos.*, Trevisa, and Wycliffe, as Pret. Sing., cannot be derived from O.E. *-gan, flēow, feaht, bānd*, which normally produce M.E. *-gan, flēw, fauht, bōnd*. The vowels in the form mentioned, or their ancestors, do however occur both in the Pret. Pl. and the P.P. (except in the case of *fought*)—O.E. *gunnon, gunnen*; *flōwon, flōwen*; *fuhton*; *bundon, bunden*. The new M.E. forms might therefore at first sight be derived from the Pret. Pl. type, and some writers explain them in this way, but as Bülbring points out (*Abl. d. starken Zeitw.*, pp. 116–17), the Pret. Pl. type is the least permanent of the various forms of the Strong Verbs, and never survives in Mod. Engl. unless it be the type also of the Past Participle. While therefore the Pl. may have helped to fix its type in the Pret. Sing., it seems probable that the main influence was exerted by the P.P. The form *fought* in M.E. is ambiguous. While it cannot represent the old Pret. Sing., it may represent either *fūht* with *ou* for *ū*, in which case it might be derived from the Pret. Pl., or the *ou* may stand for a diphthong, in which case it would represent the type of the old P.P. *fohten*.

The Mod. form [fɔ̄t] cannot be descended from *fūht* which would give [f*aut*], but can perfectly well represent the old P.P. type, just as O.E. *dohter*, M.E. *douhter* (*ou* = diphthong) has become [dɔ̄tə]. The spelling of the Present-day form points to the P.P. and not to the Pret. Sing. type *fauht*, which though it would also become [fɔ̄t] would be spelt *faught*.

This mode of levelling is known as the *Western type* (German, *westlicher Ausgleich*).

Transference of Verbs from one Class to another.

§ 351. The verb *spēken*, O.E. *sprecan*, belonged originally to Class V, and ran *sprecan*, *spræc*, *spræcon*, *sprecen*, but in M.E. a P.P. *spōken*, from which, of course, our form is derived, is found. It is clear that this form with *o* is on the analogy of the P.P. of Cl. IV, e.g. *brōken*. This class differs from V only in having *o* in the P.P. Other verbs in M.E. undergo the same transference, such as *ȝeuen* 'give', for which a P.P. *ȝouen* is often found, though this form can also be explained by assuming Scandinavian influence (see Price, p. 100, and references there given), and the Preterites *slew*, *drew* (O.E. *slōg*, *drōg*) which show the influence of the reduplicating verbs *grōwan*, *grēōw*, M.E. Pret. S. *grēw*. The contact must have arisen from the existence of a form (Inf.) *slō*, which would be parallel to *grōw-*, *blōw*, etc. *Slo* actually occurs in Shakespeare, and may be from Scand. *slā*, or *slew*, *drew* may both be explained as loan-forms from the Nth., where **slā(wen)*, **drā(wen)* would be parallel to *blāwen—blēw*, *þrāwen—þrēw*, etc.

NOTE. Owing to the very large number of questions, many of them of great interest, which arise in the history of the English Strong Vbs., it is utterly impossible, within the limits of a small book, to attempt to deal with the subject in any but the most superficial manner. A full treatment would mean to a great extent the discussion of each individual verb, the enumeration of all its forms at every period, and an account of how each form arose, in so far as it was not the normal representative of the O.E. form. Most of the vagaries fall, as a matter of fact, under one or other of the principles mentioned above. It is the details of the application of Analogy between one class and another which cause most difficulty. We can only deal here with a few outstanding verbs under each class. For a thorough treatment of the problems, and an enumeration of the chief facts, the student must refer to the works of Bülbring, Dibelius, and above all to the illuminating book of Price, with its copious collection of the forms of each verb found among writers from Caxton to Elizabeth. The following account is chiefly based on Price's work. I have had to resist the temptation to enter into many an alluring discussion, and have necessarily restricted the treatment mainly to the elucidation of the forms of Present-day Literary and Standard English.

The Classes of Strong Verbs in M.E. and Mod. English.

§ 352. **Class I** (O.E. *ī—ā—ĭ—ĭ*). Type: *write*, *wrote*, *written*.

This class preserved its integrity to a great extent in M.E., and added the French *estriver*, M.E. *strīve*, *stroof*, *strĭven*. The *e*-forms in P.P., *wrētcn*, *smēten*, etc., found in M.E. and down to the seventeenth century, may be explained according to Luick's principle (§ 174) or from the non-W.S. *wrcoten*, etc.

Bite preserves the old Pret. *bote* as late as 1557. The form is found in Caxton and Coverdale.

Chide, originally a Weak Verb (O.E. Pret. *cīdde*), passed into this class in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Coverdale and Authorized Version of the Bible have *chode*, and P.P. *chid* and *chidden* appear in Shakespeare.

Slide retains *slode* in Caxton, and Ben Jonson allows it. Present-day *slid* may be explained from the P.P., but also may be due to *hide*, *hid*.

NOTE. *Hide*, an old weak verb, like *chide*, has been drawn partly into this class, the Pret. M.E. *hīdde* suggesting the Pret. Pl. and P.P. type of Cl. I. The suffix *-en* in the P.P. shows that it is felt as a Strong Verb. When once *hidden* had arisen, comparable to *slidden*, it was natural for the latter verb to develop a Pret. Sing. *slid*.

Strike in M.E. had the normal Pret. *strōk*, O.E. *strāc*. This became Early Mod. *stroke*. In early seventeenth century *strook*, *struck* began to take its place. By the side of M.E. *strōk* there existed also a form *strake*, and a P.P. *strōken*, on analogy of *brāke*, *brōken*, helped by *sāte*, *sitten*, parallel to *strāke*, *stricken*. *Struck* may be due to analogy of *stuck*. *Stick*, earlier *stēken*, had forms *stāke*, *stōken* parallel to *strāke*, *strōken*, and it seems possible the latter may also have had an Inf. *strick*, when the analogy would be complete. *Stuck* itself may owe its vowel to the *sting*, *stung* Class.

The regular Verbs of this class in Present-day Engl. are *write*, *ride*, *stride* (P.P. doubtful), *smite*, *rise*, *drive*.

Bide, *abide*, *shine* retain the old Pret. but have lost the P.P., the latter being either Weak, or having the vowel of the Pret. *Shone* is now pronounced both as [ʃon] and [ʃoun].

§ 353. **Class II** (O.E. *ēo—ēa—u—o*). Types: *freeze*, *froze*, *frozen*; *choose*, *chose*, *chosen*.

In this class the interchange of *s—r*, *ð—d*, etc., has been eliminated.

Freeze. In O.E. *-frēosan*, *-frēas*, *-fruron*, *-froren*. The Present-day Inf. is normally derived from the O.E. form. The Old Pret. Sing. and Pl. have disappeared, and their place has been taken by the P.P. type, with *z* from the Inf. Caxton still has a Pret. *frore* with no alteration of the medial consonant. *Frore* is found in 1494, and *froze* first in Shakespeare. Milton's 'parching air burns *frore*' is the old P.P.

Flee, fly. The O.E. verbs *flēon* and *flēogan* differed only in the Inf. The former meant *flee*, the latter *fly*. *Flee* is descended from *flēon*, M.E. *flee(n)*; *fly* from the type seen in

2nd and 3rd Pers. Sing. Pres. O.E. *fliehst, fliehþ*, which produce a new M.E. Inf. *flīen, flȳe(n)*, the latter being found in Chaucer, etc. Chaucer uses the Pret. Sing. *fleih, fley* (O.E. *flēh* from *flēāh*) indifferently in the senses 'flew' and 'fled', and indeed the Infinitives are also confused during the whole M.E. and well into the Mod. Period. The new Pret. *fleu* is found in *Rob. of Glos.*, and is the ancestor of our *flew*. It is due to the analogy of the Reduplicating Verbs *blōwan, blēōw*, M.E. *blēu*, etc., and was encouraged by the form of the P.P. *flōwen* (O.E. *flogen*) parallel to *blōwen*, etc. Our P.P. *flown* is of course descended from the O.E. and M.E. forms. It is possible that a further association with O.E. *flēōw* from *flōwan* 'flow' may have existed. Chaucer has also a Pret. Sing. *flough* 'didst fly', and a Pret. Pl. *flowen* in the sense of 'fled'. The former is from the old P.P. type *flŏg-*, M.E. *flouh-*; the latter is probably also from this type. In Early Mod. the new weak Pret. for *flee* comes in, and Tyndale has *fleed* which may simply be a new formation from *flee* + *d*, or, if *ee* represents a short vowel, it may be derived, as has been suggested, from O.E. *flēdan* 'flow' (cp. *flōd*), Pret. *flēdde*, M.E. *fledde*. This would be the ancestor of our *fled*.

Choose. The O.E. *ċēōsan—ċēās—curon—coren* is normally represented in Chaucer, so far as the Inf. and Pret. Sing. types are concerned, by *cheesen* [ē], and *chees* [ē̄]. The Pret. Pl. and P.P. are both *chosen*, which show the O.E. P.P. type as regards the vowel, the *s* [z] introduced from Inf. as in *frozen*, and *ch* generalized from the Inf. Pres. and Pret. Sing. The *chese* (Pret.) type is last found in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. *Chose* occurs in Pecock, and in Caxton, but the latter also has Chaucer's form, and a form *chāse*, the explanation of which is doubtful.

It is of course the 'Western' penetration of the P.P. type into the Pret.

It remains to explain the form *choose* [tʃūz]. This may be derived from O.E. *ċēōsan* by a shifting of stress, giving M.E. *chōsen* instead of *chēsen* from O.E. *ċēōsan*. This type of Infin. is found before 1530. As early as 1300 *chuse* occurs in *S. Marharete* (W. Midl.), and in 1510 the spelling *chewse* is found, and this rhymes with *refuse*. This type, spelt *chuse*, continues side by side with *choose*, etc., during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. It is not infrequent in first quarter of the nineteenth century. The *chuse*-type, as seems to emerge from the rhyme, had the sound of [ȳ], and this would point to an origin from O.E. *ēō*, which was written *u* in M.E. in the Sth.-West, and W. Midl. We may derive

this type, then, from a Western form of O.E. *cēōsan*. *Chuse* [tʃȳz] and *choose* [tʃūz] would later be levelled under the latter pronunciation. See § 265 on Early Mod. [ȳ].

Lose. O.E. *lēōsan—lēās—luron—loren*. This has now been merged in the Wk. Verb. It owes its spelt form to O.E. *losian*, and its vowel sound possibly to association with *loose*, or as suggested in the case of *choose*, by a stress-shifting in O.E., that is, a form *lēósan*, M.E. *lōsen*. The normal descendant of the O.E. Inf. is M.E. *lēsen*, which occurs as late as Shakespeare, and the Authorized Version. In Sth. M.E., Pret. Sing. *-lēs*, Pl. *-luren* are found. Early Mod. has the Wk. *lost*. The old P.P. *lorn*, and *forlorn* are often used in sixteenth century, and a case is recorded as late as the eighteenth. The Adj. *forlorn* with an independent meaning is now quite dissociated from its original connexions. It is used as an Adj. as early as the middle of the twelfth century.

§ 354. **Class III** (O.E. *in—an—un—un*). Types: *sing, sang, sung*; *find, found, found*; (*el—(e)al—ul—ol*): *swell, swollen*.

Most of the old verbs with nasals have preserved the original forms. In *find*, etc., the lengthening of the vowels before *-nd* has produced the interchange [*ai—au*].

Cling, sing, spin, begin, spring, ring, swim, drink, stink, sink preserve the three types of the old Inf. and Pres., the Pret. Sing., and the P.P. *Swing, win, slink, sting, sling, fling*, on the other hand, have levelled the Pret. under the P.P. type. *Wan, span* are still found in sixteenth century, *clang* in fifteenth, *wrang* in Shakespeare, *wroong, wrong* in Spenser, *flang* in Ascham, *flong* in Kyd.

Of the verbs with *e—help, delve, melt, swell*, and *yield*—the form *swollen* is still used, but more as an adj. than a P.P., the ordinary form of which would be *swelled*, while the Pret. is always weak; *molten* is purely adjectival, *delve* is practically obsolete except in mannered speech or writing, and is always weak; *holpen* survives in the public mind simply on account of its occurrence in the *Magnificat*. *Yield* is now a Wk. Verb. The old Pret. *yold(e)* from O.E. *ġēald*, or perhaps from the O.E. P.P. type *ġōlden*, is found in Caxton, and in Spenser. P.P. *yolden* is found as late as Gascoigne (died 1577).

Turning to the *find*-group—Late O.E. *findan, fānd, fundon, funden*—we find this preserved in Chaucer as *finden, fōnd, founden, founden*, and the *fōnd*-type in Pret. survives in Caxton and his contemporaries, and into the sixteenth century. But Caxton and other fifteenth-century writers also use the P.P.

type *founde*, and this is the exclusive form in the principal sixteenth-century writers.

The verbs *bind, grind, wind* have very much the same history as *find*.

Run demands a few words to itself. The O.E. forms were: *irnan, iernan, yrnan, eornan* (Merc.), *arn, urnon*; *rinnan, rann, runnon, runnen*. The M.E. Inf. and Pres. type is usually *renn-* which is probably Scandinavian. The earliest example of *run* as Pres. type is about 1325 (*Metr. Hom.*), and this form in a Northern dialect is difficult to explain. It is hardly the ancestor of our form, unless indeed it be a borrowing from the Sth. or Midlands. The old Sthn. *yrnan* would become M.E. *ürnen*, which with metathesis would give *rünnen* and Mod. *run*. On the other hand, this might be derived from Merc. *eornan*, which would also become *ürnen* in W. Midl. (*y* from *æ*).

§ **355. Class IV** (O.E. *e—æ—ǣ—o*). Types: *bear, bare* (*bore*), *born*; *break, brake* (*broke*), *broken*.

Bear. In non-W.S. the Pret. Pl. was *bēron*, etc., in O.E., and in Kentish, and part of the Merc. area, the Pret. Sing. was *bĕr*. In M.E. we find *bēr—bēren* in the Sth. The lengthening may be a natural process in syllables ending in a single consonant (though this is doubtful), but it may also be explained from the analogy of the other forms of the verb, which all had long vowel—*bēren, bēre, bōren*, with lengthening in open sylls., in Pres., Inf., and P.P., and *bēren* with an original long vowel in Pret. Pl. Those dialects which retained O.E. *æ*, retracted this to *ă* in M.E., and here we get a Pret. Sing. *băr* and *bār(e)*, where the lengthening may be explained like that in *bēr*. This M.E. *bār* was the ancestor of *bare*, so common in fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.

In *Gen. and Ex.* we already find a Pret. Sing. *bore* which need not be due entirely to the P.P. type of the same verb, but partly also to the analogy of *swōr*. The two verbs would then run *swēren—swōr—swōren*; *bēren—bōr—bōren*. In this case the *ō* in the Pret. would be tense, that in the P.P. *bōren* slack, unless the two verbs were completely levelled under one type, probably that of *swēren*, with tense *ō* in Pret. and P.P. The only form changed then would be *bōren*.

Modern *bore* in Literary and Standard Engl. is clearly the P.P. type. This Pret. begins to come into use in the sixteenth century.

Break, shear, tear, wear, steal. The M.E. forms of these verbs are parallel to those of *beran*. Both *brăk* and *brāk(e)* existed in Pret. Sing., as is seen from the rhymes. The latter gave the Biblical and general sixteenth and seventeenth-century *brake*. *Broke* of course comes from the P.P., and the same is true of *shore*, *tore*, *wore*, *stole*. The Pret. *stale*, as well as *brake*, *tare*, *ware*, all occur in the Authorized Version, the first and last being much less common than the others.

Come. O.E. *cuman*, *cwōm*, *cōm*, *cwōmon*, *cōmon*, *cumen*. This verb is quite irregular already in O.E., the normal vowel sequence being seen in the verb *niman*, *năm*, *nōmon*, *numen* (cp. Gothic *qiman—qam—qēmum—qumans*). The Present-day Inf. may be the normal descendant of M.E. *cŭmen* (written *comen*), or, as Luick believes, it may be from M.E. *cōmen*, with lengthening and lowering of *u* to *ō* in *cū-me*. Our Pret. *came* presupposes a M.E. *cām*, which certainly existed by the side of *căm*. This latter may be either a survival of a normal O.E. *cam* or *cwam* unrecorded, or it may be a M.E. formation on the analogy of *năm*, a comparatively common word in M.E. It is clear that no other verbs of this Class could have influenced the forms of *come*, as they are quite differentiated from it by various combinative changes. The *ā* in *cām* can be accounted for by the influence of the quantity of the Pret. Pl. *cōmen*. Caxton and the Latest London Charters (Lekebusch) have *came*, but other sixteenth-century writers still use the old *come*, written sometimes *coome*, and (in Cely Papers) *cwn* = [kūm]. Chaucer has *căm—cāmen*, and *coomen* in the Pret.

§ 356. **Class V** (O.E. *e—æ—ǣ—e*).

None of the verbs of this class are in all respects the absolute representatives of the O.E. forms. *Speak* has passed completely into Class IV; *bid* from O.E. *biddan* has become blended with O.E. *bēodan*; *sit* has abandoned its P.P. type altogether; *fret* has become quite isolated from *eat*, and is weak: *eat* itself alone among these verbs preserves the old P.P. type, but has lost its old Pret. *Give* and *get* have undergone changes of various kinds not only in the vowels of all the types, but also in the initial consonants. It will be seen that most verbs of this class developed, at one time or another, P.P.'s in *ō*, which vowel penetrated to the Pret. as well. Mod. Engl. has in some cases got rid of the *ō*-forms.

Speak needs no particular comment. Its history is very similar to that of *break*. *Spōken* is found in Pret. Pl. in E. M.E., and it must have got there presumably from the

P.P., which had been formed from *brōken* by the complete association of the two verbs in their other forms. The usual M.E. form in the Pret., however, is *spăk*, and Chaucer has a Pret. Pl. *spāken* [ɛ̄]. *Spoke* does not become the usual Pret. form till after 1600.

Tread. Parallel to *spake*, etc., Caxton has Pret. *trad*, *trade*. Sixteenth-century writers have also Pret. *troad*, P.P. *troaden*. Other writers in this and the following century have both *trŏd*, *trode*, *trodden*, *troden*.

Bid, forbid. O.E. *biddan*, *bæd*, *bǣdon*, *bēden* 'pray'. From this we can explain our Pres. and Inf. type, and the Pret. forms [bæd] and [beid] from M.E. type *bāde*. The P.P. *bidden*, found already in M.E. and common in the Elizabethan period, is less easy to explain. It is difficult to establish an association between this verb and the *ridden* group of P.P.'s except through the Pret. *bōde* which may have existed in the sixteenth century. The spelling is often found, but Price finds it difficult to settle the length of the vowel. If long it could be explained from a P.P. *bōden*, and this in the same way as *trōden*, *spōken*. Having formed a Pret. *bōde* like *rōde*, it would be easy and natural to form a new P.P. *bidden* like *ridden*. On the other hand, it seems certain that short forms *bod*, *bŏden* also existed, and these can be explained as due to M.E. *bŏd(e)n*, a by-form of *bō-den*. The short *bod* in the Pret. may be due to this type of P.P.

By the side of *bid* in the Pres. and Inf., M.E. and Early Mod. (Chaucer and Caxton) have *bede*, and also *bēden* in the P.P. The latter is the normal descendant of the O.E. form. The former may be explained from confusion with O.E. *bēodan*, M.E. *bēden* 'to command'. The P.P. of this verb would be *bōden* or *bŏden* (from *bod(e)n*), and the short type would account for a Pret. *bŏd*.

Eat has now usually the Pret. [ɛt], though in Ireland people often say [īt] from the P.P. type. The short type of Pret. is found already in the fourteenth century, and is probably due to the analogy of the weak Prets. *led*, M.E. *ledde* from *lead*, E. Mod. and M.E. *bet* from *beat*, etc. The archaic Pret. *ate*, preserved to some extent in the spelling, but rarely in speech, presupposes a M.E. *āte*, and *frate* from O.E. *fretan* is found. The explanation of these forms is the same as that of *bade*, *spake*, etc. The P.P. *eaten* is quite normal, and the Scotch [ɛtn] is due to M.E. *ĕtn*.

Get, beget, forget. O.E. *-ġietan* (non-W.S. *ġetan*, *-ġeotan*), *-ġeat* (non-W.S. *-gæt*, *-ġet*), *-ġeāton* (non-W.S. *ġēton*), *-ġeten*, is

always compounded with *on-*, *bi-*, *for-*. The use of uncompounded *get*, the short vowel, and its initial consonant are alike due to Scandinavian influence (O.N. *geta*). The M.E. native forms of the Inf. and Pres. are *ȝēten*, *yēten*, *yuten*, etc. The M.E. Pret. Sing. was *ȝat*, *yat* from *ġæt*, and *ȝet* from *ġet*. The Pret. Pl. was either *yāten*, etc., by the side of Sing. *yāt*, *yăt*, or the normal *yēten* from the non-W.S. *ġēton*. By the side of these, forms with initial *g-* are also found, and Chaucer has *gēte*, *gat*, *gĕten*. The existence of *gāte* (Pret. Sing.) is also established by rhymes for M.E. and Early Mod.

Caxton has Pret. *gat*, *gatte*, and *gate*, and usually *-yeten*, *-yete* in P.P. He has, however, the *o*-forms *for-* and *be-goten*, and these are common in the Latest London Ch. (Lekebusch). The *o*-forms, according to Price, are not established till near the end of the sixteenth century. While *forgotten* has remained in Standard English, the uncompounded *gotten* was rarer than *got* after 1600, except in the Authorized Version and two other writers cited by Price.

As might have been expected, long forms such as *gōte* (rhyming with *wrōte*) occur in sixteenth-century English. Price sums up this question by saying, 'It looks as if at the beginning of the period (E. Mod.) there were in the Inf. alternative forms with long and short *e*, in the P.P. with long and short *o*, in the Pret. two sets, with long and short *a* and with long and short *o*; that the long forms in Inf. and with *ō* were already obsolescent, while the long *a* lasted through the whole period'.

Give. O.E. (W.S.) *ġiefan*, *ġeaf*, *ġeāfon*, *giefen*; non-W.S. *ġefan*, *ġeofan*—*ġæf*, *ġēf*—*ġēfon*, *ġefen*, *ġeofen*. It may be said at once that the two chief problems are the initial consonant and the vowel, in Mod. *give*. It is quite certain that O.E. *ġ-* could not become [g-] and we may put this down to Scandinavian influence. As regards the vowel in *give*, this has been variously explained as due to the analogy of the 2nd and 3rd Pers. Pres. *ġifst*, *ġifþ* (from **geƀis-*, *geƀiþ*), or from a W.S. form *ġifan*, P.P. *ġifen* (from *ġief-*). Another possibility is the analogy of *begin* through *gan* parallel to *gaf*, *yaf*. The normal M.E. forms from non-W.S. are *yēuen*, *yaf*, *yāue* (*yef*), *yāuen*, *yēuen*. By the side of these, *giue*, *gaf*, *gēven*, *given*, etc., are also found in M.E., which are a blend between the O.N. and the English types. Again, a Pret. *yōue*, *gōuc* also occurs. The latter may be either pure Scand. (O.N. *gǫfom* Pret. Pl.) or derived from the W.S. Pl. *gēāfon* with a shifting of stress to the second element of the diphthong. The form *āfen* from *Laud Chron.* may conceivably be the ancestor of

yōue, etc., but this is very doubtful. Since P.P. forms *youen*, *govyn* are found in the fifteenth century, these may be due to the same analogy as the other *ō* P.P.'s in this class, and the type then extended to the Pret.

The *yēve*-forms in Inf., etc., are very usual in the London dialect of fifteenth century, though Caxton besides this form has also *geue*, but more often *gyue*. In the London Charters (Lekebusch) *yeue* is most frequent, but *geue* is also common, and *giue*, *gyue*, etc., are much rarer. During the sixteenth century *yeve* practically dies out, but *geue* still predominates over *gyue*, *gyve*, *give*, etc. There is reason for thinking that the spelling *give*, etc., often stands for the pronunciation [gīv], so that the *geve*-type is really commoner than appears at first sight. It may be noted that the final consonant appears both as *v* (or *u*) and *f*. The latter is due to generalizing the final sound of the Pret. Sing., the former to the other inflected forms.

The *give*-forms are fixed by seventeenth century.

In the Pret. the *y-* dies out during the sixteenth century. Sir T. Smith refers to *yaf* and *yave* as antiquated. Henceforth the struggle is between the short *găf* and the long *gāve*, and the latter becomes the only form in most of the principal writers before the end of the century. In the P.P. the *y*-forms die out by the end of the fifteenth century, but the two forms *geven*, *given* (in various spellings) remain during the whole sixteenth century, *geven* becoming gradually less and less frequent, until, after the first quarter of the seventeenth century, it apparently disappears from Literature altogether.

At least two examples of *geven* [gīvən] occur, however, in the Wentworth Papers in 1706.

See. O.E. *sēon—seah*, *sæh—sāwon* (also, poetical), *sægon—sewen*, *sawen*. The adj., W.S. *ġesīene* 'visible', non-W.S. *ġesēne*, is also used as a P.P. already in O.E. in Anglian. This form spreads, and becomes the usual one in M.E., e.g. Chaucer, etc., *yseene*, Present-day *seen*.

The M.E. forms of the Pret. are: *sauh*, whence *saugh* and *saw*, from Angl. *sæh* through *săh*; *seih* which may represent a Sth. *seh*, with diphthonging before a fronted *h*; *sȳ* = *sī*, also *sīh* from the O.E. Pl. type *sægon*, *sæh*, *sēh*, *sīh* (cp. *ī* 'eye' from *ēh*).

The *saw*-type appears to be Anglian in origin; it does not occur early in the South. The *-w* is presumably due to the influence of the Pl. It is possible that *sei*, etc., may sometimes be due to the Pl. *sæzen*, M.E. *sēzen*, *sēyen*.

In Early Mod. the London dialect seems generally to have

used the ancestors of our present forms, though such P.P. forms as *sayn*, *seyne*, etc., still survive, from earlier *-sēȝen*.

Sit. O.E. *sittan—sæt—sǣton* (non-W.S. *sēton*)—*seten*. The only noteworthy point about this verb in Present-day English is the disappearance of the old P.P., which has been replaced by the Pret. type. In Early Mod. *set* was often used, generally with the auxiliary *be*—'I am, was *set*,' etc., which may be either a survival of the old P.P. or that of the wk. *settan*. In Early Mod. a P.P. *sitten* is sometimes used, and also *sat* and *sate*.

Bequeath, quoth. The former of these two is now always weak and seems to have been so during the whole Mod. period. The uncompounded verb appears only in Pret. during. Mod. period, sometimes as *quod*, sometimes as *quoth*. The *o*-forms are found both in the Pret. and P.P. during E. M.E. —*quod*, *quoðen*, etc., as well as the normal *quaþ*, *quāden*, *queden*. Various explanations have been suggested to account for *quoth*, but since it is found in the P.P. as well as in the Pret., it is difficult to see why it should not be due, like the *o*-forms of so many verbs in this class, to the analogy of the P.P. of Class IV. We know that *spōke—spōken* existed, and the association in meaning between *spōke* and *quōth* or *quōd* is surely close enough. In the now antiquated, and half jocular expression *quotha*, we have *quoth* + *a*, the Sthn. form of the Pers. Pron. which we saw already in Trevisa (§ 300). Against the above explanation of *quoth*, it must be recorded that this form occurs in early texts where *spāk*, etc., are the usual Pret. forms. It may, as Bülbring suggests, be due to the influence of *w*, and that perhaps chiefly in unstressed positions? In this case it is from *quăþ* and is short.

Lie. O.E. *liċġan—læġ—lǣgon—leġen*. The direct descendant of the old Inf. and Pres. is M.E. *liggen* (lidʒen). As with so many verbs of this type, a new Inf. and 1st Pers. Pres. are formed from the analogy of the 2nd and 3rd Pers., O.E. *liġ(e)st*, *liġ(e)þ*, which give in M.E. *liȝest*, *liȝeþ*, whence the new forms, ich *liȝe*, or *lye*, Inf. *lyen*, etc. *N.E.D.* records *ligge* (probably = [lig] a Nthn. type) as late as 1590. The Mod. forms *lay*, *lain* are normal descendants of the O.E. forms. After 1400 a type of P.P. *lyen*, on the analogy of Inf. *lye*, is common. This form still remains in the Prayer Bk. version of the Psalms—*though ye have lien among the pots*.

Weave is like *speak* in having *o*-forms in Pret. *wore*, and P.P. *woven*.

§ **357. Class VI** (O.E. *a—ō—ō—a*; also, with *i*-mutation in Inf. type, *e—o—o—a*).

This class has had a varied fate. Some verbs have preserved the old forms, or their Mod. equivalents, like *shake*; others have passed into the group of Reduplicating Verbs like *slay*, but more have become wholly weak, or preserve a strong form, constantly, or occasionally.

Shake, take (of Scand. origin), **forsake, awake, wake,** all have now the gradation [ei, ŭ, ei—(ən)], though *wake* and *awake* have also weak forms.

Stand (**understand**) has lost its old P.P. *standen* and uses the Pret. type, just as *sit* does. This form of P.P. was introduced in the fifteenth century and gradually won, though *stande, stonde* are also in use during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By the side of these a weak *-standed* is common in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in the P.P., but not, apparently, in the Pret.

Swear has [ɔ̄] in the Pret. before *r*, instead of [ū] (§ 238). The P.P. *swōre* occurs already in the fourteenth century. It may easily be accounted for on the analogy of *bōre(n)*. The Biblical Pret. *sware* also shows the influence of Cl. IV.

Draw, slay, with their Prets. from the Reduplicating group, have already been discussed above, § 351. **Gnaw** also shows some instances of a Pret. *gnew* in sixteenth century. The P.P. *gnawen* is less rare, in fact it may be heard to-day. Already in the fourteenth century the weak Pret. was in use, and this is found in Auth. Vers. and other sixteenth and seventeenth century texts. The verb is often spelt *knaw* from fifteenth to eighteenth century.

Bake has long been a weak verb. O.E. *bōc* was replaced by a weak Pret. in the fifteenth century, but the P.P. *baken* is found in the sixteenth century.

Wash already in E. M.E. formed a Pret. *weeshe, weoshe* after the model of the Reduplicating Verbs. This is still in use in Caxton's works, but the wk. Pret. is found in Coverdale. The strong P.P. still survives in the adj. *unwashen*.

Wax. Tottel and Spenser still have the old Pret. *wox*, but a commoner form, in Caxton and later, is *wex*, the ancestor of which is found already in O.E. *wēox*. Here we have the influence of the Reduplicating Verbs. The P.P. *waxen* is still found in Shakespeare, and the Auth. Vers.

Shape. The Pret. *shope* is still found in Surrey, Coverdale, and Spenser. The strong P.P. is found in Caxton, and in

Coverdale. The compounds with *mis-*, *un-*, *ill-*, which are of course Adjectives from the old P.P., still survive.

Shave has now only *shaven*, and this is an Adjective, but this was used as a P.P. during the whole Elizabethan period. The old strong Pret. *shōve* occurs in Caxton and Coverdale.

Heave is now usually weak throughout, but the strong Pret. *hove* is still in colloquial use.

Laugh. The Pret. *lough*, normally descended from O.E. *hlōh*, was frequent down to the end of the fifteenth century, but is not found often after 1500. See § 260 and Note on relation of our [lāf] to the form recorded by the spelling.

§ 358. Reduplicating Verbs

A. Beat. This is the only survivor of the class. But for the P.P. in *-en* we should probably feel this verb as weak. The O.E. forms were *bēatan—bēot—bēoton—bēaten*. Though now levelled, the Inf. and Pret. must in Late M.E. have been [bīt—bēt] respectively. The Early Mod. forms collected by Price do not show any distinction made in the spelling.

B. Blow-Class. *Blow*, *blew*, *blown* represent O.E. *blāwan*, *blēow*, *blēawon*, *blawen*. To this class belong also *crow* (also weak), *know*, *mow* (also weak), *throw*.

Sow still retains strong P.P. but has weak Pret. and often a weak P.P.

Flow is now only weak, though its old strong P.P. may have helped to fix *flown* as P.P. of *fly*.

Hew, now generally weak, has also a strong P.P., especially in passive—*hewn down*, Adj. *rough-hewn*, *unhewn*, etc.

Snow has long lost its old Pret. *snew* and P.P. *snow(e)n*, but these survived in literary English in the sixteenth century, and the grammarian Charles Butler (1632) still recognizes them.

C. Fall-Class. O.E. *feallan—fēoll—fēollon—feallen*. Our *fell* and *fallen* are normal representatives of the old forms. The common M.E. *fill* (Chaucer) has not been satisfactorily explained.

Hold is from the Angl. *hāldan*. The Sthn. and Kt. *hēlden* still survives, though rarely in Chaucer (§ 166). A few cases of *held* as an Inf. are found in M.E. Nthn. texts. Here they must be either loan-forms from Sth. or new formations from Pret. A few scattered forms are found in the sixteenth-century Acts of Parliament, and Price explains these from the

Pret. This is certainly right, for seeing how rare the non-Anglian forms are in M.E. these can hardly be survivals of the old Sthn. form.

The old P.P. *holden* survives still in official language—'*at a meeting holden* on such and such a day'. The compound *beholden*, now rather archaic, is still used. Price's *holden*-forms seem to occur mostly in official sources. The Pret. *held* is shortened from M.E. *hēld*.

Irregular Verbs

§ 359. To be.

O.E. Pres. Indic.

'am'-type.

	W.S.		Merc.	Nthmb.	W.S. & Merc.	Nthmb.
Sing.	*eom*		*eam*	*am*	*sīe, sī*	S. and Pl. *sīe, sē*
	eart		*earð*	*arð*		
	is		*is*	*is*		
Pl.	*we*	*sindon*	*earun*	*aron*	*sien*	
	ge	*sint*	*sind*	*sint*		
	hie		*sindon*	*sinden*		

'be'-type. Pres. Indic. Pres. Subj.

	W.S.	Merc.	Nthmb.	W.S. & Merc.	Nthmb.	
Sing.	*bēo*	*bīom*	*biom*			Inf. *beon, beon.*
	bist	*bis(t)*	*bist*	*bīo*	*bīā*	Part. Pres. *bēonde*
	bið	*bið*	*bið*	*bēo*	*bīe*	
Pl.	*beoð*	*bioð*	*bioðun*	*bēon*		Imperat. *bēo*, Pl. *bēoþ*
	bioð		*biað*	*bīon*		

Preterite Indic.

Sing.	Pl.	
ic, þe wæs / *þu wǣre* / *he wæs*	*wǣron* (non-W.S. *wēron*)	Inf. *wesan* Part. Pres. *wesende*

Pret. Subj. S. *wǣre*; Pl. *wǣren* Imperat. *wes*; Pl. *wesað*

M.E. *1st Pers. S.* All dialects agree in having *am* (*æm, ham*), as the usual form; *bēo* is also found in E. Midl.

2nd Pers. S. Nth. has *es*; E. and W. Midl. *art*; Southern and Kt. *bēþ, art.*

3rd Pers. S. Nth. *es*; Midl. *is, ys*, W. Midl. also *bēoþ* and *buþ*; Sthn. *bēoþ, bēþ, is*; Kt. *bīoþ, bīeþ, byēþ.*

Pl. (*all Pers.*). Nth. *ar, arc, er, erc, bēs* (*bēn*); W. Midl. *bēn, arn, bēoþ, bēþ* (*P. Plowm.*); E. Midl. *arcn, bēn* (*Orm.* has also *sinndenn*); Sthn. *bēoþ, bēþ*; Kt. *bīoþ, bīeþ.*

The London sources before Chaucer have *is*; Pl. *bēoþ, bēon, bēn*; *beo, be* Subj. Pres.; Prct. *wæs, wes, was*; Pl. *weren, were*; Inf. *beon, be* (Dölle, p. 76).

Chaucer has *am, art, is*, Pl. *been, bee*, rarely *arn* (ten Brink, § 197). The fourteenth-century London documents agree on the whole with this, but occasionally have the Sth. Pl. *beþ* (Morsbach, *Schriftspr.*, p. 149). Caxton's usage agrees with that of to-day in Sing. In Pl. he has *ar*, but also *bēn, bē* (Römstedt, p. 50).

The later London Documents show some variety in the Pl.: London Charters *been, ben*; State Records *are*; Parliamentary Records usually *been, bēn*, occasionally *byn, buth* twice; *ar, arne, arn* not infrequently (Lekebusch, pp. 126, 127, 128).

The other parts of this verb in M.E. are: Inf. *been, be*, Kt. *bi*; Imperat. Nth. *bē*; Midl. *bē*, Pl. *bēþ*; Sth. *bē, bēþ*; Subj. Pres. *bēo*, Pl. *bēon*, etc., *bēoþ*.

Pret. *was, wes* (*wast* 2nd Sing. L. M.E. *-t* on analogy of *ar-t*), *wēren, wēre*; Subj. Pret *wēre*.

Pres. Part. (Chaucer) *bēing*; Past Part. (*i*)*-bēn*, (*i*)*-bē*.

Be in the Pres. Indic. survives in many Regional Dialects, used both as S. and Pl. In Standard and Literary it is extinct, except as a poetical archaism in the Pl. and in the Subj. *Are*, originally Nth. and Nth. Midland, penetrated early into the London Dialect, probably from E. Midl., but was not exclusively used even in the literary language till the seventeenth century.

Preterite Present and other Anomalous Verbs

§ 360. Pret.-Pres. Verbs have, with the function of a Present Tense, one which is a strong Pret. in form. They form new Pret. forms with the weak suffix *-de, -te*.

Can.

O.E. Inf. *cunnan* 'to be able, to know'.

Past Part. *cūþ* 'known', cp. *un-cūþ* 'unknown', formally identical with *uncouth*.

Pres. Indic. S. *can, canst, can* (also *con*, etc.); Pl. *cunnon*.

Pret. S. *cūþe* 'knew, could', *cūþest, cuþe*; Pl. *cūþon*. (O.E. *cūþe*, Goth. *kunþa* have never been satisfactorily explained.)

Pres. Subj. S. *cunne*; Pl. *cunnon*.

Pret. Subj. S. *cūþe*; Pl. *cūþon*.

M.E. (Chaucer's forms), cp. ten Brink, § 198.

Inf. *connen*; P.P. *kouth*.

Pres. Ind. S. *can*, *canst*, *can*; Pl. *conne(n)* [kŭnen].
Pret. *kouthe*, *koude*.

The London Documents preserve distinction between S. *can*, Pl. *conne* in 1425, and in Pret. *conde*, *kondc* (Morsbach, pp. 148, 150, 151); Pecock (1449) has Pres. Pl. *kunnen*, and *coupist* in Pret.

Caxton still appears to distinguish the Pl. *conne* from Sing. *can* occasionally (Römstedt, p. 48).

Coverdale (1535) has Pret. *coude*, and also the new spelling *couldc*, on analogy of *would*, *should* (Swearingen, p. 42).

§ 361. Dare.

O.E. Pres. Ind. S. *dear(r)*, *dearst*, *dear(r)*; Pl. *durron*.
Pret. *dorste*; Pl. *dorston*.
Subj. *dyrre*, *durre*.

M.E. (Chaucer). Pres. S. *dar*, *darst*, *dar*; Pl. *dor*.
Pret. *dorste*.

In Mod. Engl. there is a tendency to inflect *dare* like an ordinary Pres.—*he dares not do it*, by the side of the more historical *daren't*. Similarly a new Pret. *dared* has been formed, used both intransitively and transitively—*I dared him to do it*. *Durst* is now felt to be old-fashioned, and is becoming obsolete.

§ 362. May.

O.E. Inf. *magan*; Part. Pres. *magende*.

Pres. Ind. S. *mæġ*, *meaht* (and *miht*), *mæġ*; Pl. *māgon* (and *mægon*).

Pret. *meahte*, *mehte* (Late W.S. *mihte*).

Subj. *mæġe* (L. W.S. *māge*); Pl. *mæġen* (L. W.S. *māgon*). Latest O.E. *muge*.

M.E. (Early). Sth. S. *mei*, Kt. *mai*; Midl. *mazz* (*Orm*), *may*, *mayst*; Pl. Sth. *mahen*, *moze*, *muwen*; Kt. *muze*, *mowe*; E. Midl. *muzhenn* (*Orm*).

Inf. (W. Midl.) *mow*.

Pret. Kt., E. Midl. *mihte*, *michte*, *mizte*, *mighte*; Sth. *mahte*. Pl. E. Midl. *mihten*, *muhten*.

Chaucer has S. *may*, *might* (*mayest*) *may*; Pl. *mowen*, *mowe*, *mow*, *may*; Pret. *mighte*.

The London Documents and Caxton agree with Chaucer, except that Caxton has, as in Present-day English, *may* in the Pl. instead of the older *mowe* (Römstedt, p. 49).

§ 363. **Shall.**

O.E. Inf. *sċulan, sċeolan.*

Pres. Indic. S. *sċeal* (non-W.S. *sċæl, sċal*); Late W.S. *sċel, sċealt, sċælt, sċeal, sċæl,* etc.; Pl. *sċulon, sċeolon,* Late W.S. *sċylon.*

Pret. Indic. S. *sċeold, sċolde*; Pl. *sċeoldon.*

Subj. (W.S.) *sċiele, sċyle, sċile.*

M.E. Pres. Indic. S., Sthn. *sċal, schal*; Pl. *schulen, ssullen*; Kt. *sċel, sċeol, ssel, sselt, ssalt*; Pl. *sċule, ssollen*; E. Midl. *shall, schal, sal, salt, schalt, shalt*; Pl. *schullen, shulenn, sulen, schulle, shul*; W. Midl. *schal, shall, schalt*; Pl. *schul, schulte*; *Allit. P.* has also the curious forms *schin, schyn* 'shall', once each in Cleanness; Nth. *sal* S. and Pl. (*salle*).

Pret., Sth. *sċeolde*; Pl. *sċeolden, scholde, schulde*; Kt. *sċeolde, sċeolden, ssolde* (*Ayenb.* has 2nd S. *ssoldest*); E. Midl. *schollde, shollde, sholden, sulde, sulden, scholde, shuld*; W. Midl. *schulde*; Nth. *suld.*

London Dialect. Earliest London sources *shal*; Pr. *schullen, shullen*; Pret. *sholde, shuld* (Dölle, p. 76). Chaucer: *shal, shalt, shal*; Pl. *shullen, shul* (*shold*); Pret. *sholde.* Later Official Lond. Documents: *shall*; Pl. *shullen, shul, shalle, shal*; Pret. *sholde, shold, shulde, shuld.* Pecock distinguishes between the S. and Pl. types, *schol, schullen.* Caxton still sometimes distinguishes Pl. *shul, shulle* from Sing. *shal*(*l*), but more usually levels both under the type of the Sing. (Römstedt, 48).

§ 364. **Ought.**

This word is the descendant of the old Pret. *āhte* of O.E. *āgan* 'possess, own', a Pret. Pres. verb. In its present force expressing moral obligation, it occurs in Pres. as well as Pret. as early as the middle of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century. Thus, *bename him al ðet he ahte to hauen* 'deprived him of all that he ought to have', *Laud Chr.* Ann. 1140; *We azen þene sunnedei swiþeliche wel to wierþien* 'we ought to honour Sunday exceedingly', *Lambeth Homs.*, Morris and Skeat, I, p. 20.

§ 365. **Owe**

is the normal descendant of *āgan* 'possess', M.E. *ōwen* 'possess obligations, to be bound, obliged'. In M.E. therefore not isolated in meaning from the Pret. *āzte, oughte. Rob. of Glos.* has *þe treuþe ich ou to þe*, and Wycliffe *3eld þat þou owist* (Kellner-Bradley, p. 272). The word gradually loses

the sense of *possess* and means 'owe an obligation', and finally 'owe money', etc.

§ 366. **Own**

is from O.E. *āgnian* 'own, possess', and has entirely taken the place of the O.E. *āgan* in meaning.

§ 367. **Will.**

O.E. Inf. *willan*; Pres. Part. *willande.*
Pres. Indic. S. *wile, wilt, wile*; Pl. *willaþ.*
Pret. *wolde*; Pl. *wolden.*
Ne wille, etc., becomes *nylle*, the *w* first rounding *i* and then being lost.

M.E. The forms are *wile, wille, wulle, wule, wol(e)*. Of these the *wule*-type is from *wille*, with rounding of the vowel after *w*. *Wol*, on the other hand, is a new formation, derived by Analogy from the Pret. *wol-de.*

The following shows the distribution of the types:

Wille } Kt. Vesp. A. 22, Shoreh., *Azenb.*, *Trin. Homs.*,
Wile } *O. and N.*, *P.M.*, *Orm.*, *Gen. and Ex.*, *Havelok*, Horn, Bokenam.

Wulle } *Lambeth Homs.*, *Laz.*, *A.R.*, Horn.
Wule }

Wol(e) *P.M.*, *Laz.*, *Robt. of Glos.*, *Hendyng*, *Havelok*, Horn, *Wil. of Pal.* (only form).

Wol appears to become more common after the beginning of the fourteenth century; it is found both in the E. and W. Midl., chiefly in the latter, and to some extent in Sthn. It appears to be absent from Kt. texts, and does not occur in Morris's Glossary to *Azenbite*. It does not occur in the earliest London sources (Dölle, p. 76). In Gower it is very common, and is in fact the only form in Macaulay's *Glossary* to *Selections*. Chaucer has *wil*, but more often *wol*, especially in his prose. In the London Documents *wil, wille* (S. and Pl.) appears to occur in Morsbach's references about fifteen times, as against *wol* about thirty-five times (*Schriftspr.*, pp. 149, 151, 152). Caxton, according to Römstedt (p. 49), has only *wil(le)* in 1st and 3rd Sing., but *wolt* as well as *wilt*, and *woll* as well as *wil(le)* in Pl. The later London Documents have both *will*, and *wol*; in the Lond. Ch. *will* predominates; in State Records and Parliamentary Records both forms seem equally frequent (Lekebusch, pp. 126, 127, 128).

Coverdale has only *wil, wyl* (Swearingen, p. 42), and the same is true of Edward VI's First P. B. (1549).

The *wol*-type survives in *won't*, from *wol not.*

CHAPTER IX

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH LITERARY LANGUAGE

§ 368. RECENT research has confirmed more and more the view already expressed by Morsbach (*Neuenglische Schriftsprache*), that London is the home of the English Literary Dialect. The investigations of Dölle (*Zur Sprache Londons vor Chaucer*) have also abundantly established Morsbach's assertion that London speech was originally chiefly Southern in type, but that in the course of time the purely Southern peculiarities of the dialect retreat before the advance of more characteristically Midland elements, and, more particularly, of East Midland elements. Thus the earliest documents written in the London dialect, which begin in the time of the Conqueror, in the shape of Charters and Proclamations, and extend to beyond the middle of the thirteenth century, are unmistakably Southern in character, and are indeed written in a language that represents very fairly the normal developments of West Saxon. It is what we should expect Late W. Saxon to turn into during this period, but a distinct influence from the S. East (Kent, etc.) is visible. At the beginning of the fourteenth century we have the poems of Adam Davie, which are still largely Southern in character, but contain a more definite trace of non-Saxon elements. The Anglian element gains in intensity throughout the fourteenth century, until in the later Charters and documents examined by Morsbach in his famous monograph, and in the language of Chaucer, the purely Southern or Saxon elements have been reduced to a very much smaller proportion. Passing on three-quarters of a century to the fifteenth-century Lond. Charters and Caxton, we find the Southern features still further reduced, and there remains only slightly more of these than in Present-day Literary, and Received Standard English.

It is hardly necessary here to labour the point, so often made, that it is natural that the language of the capital should have obtained this pre-eminent position among the various

dialects of English, London being the seat and centre of Government, of the Royal Court, of the Law, of Commerce.

The question we have briefly to discuss is, what were the dialectal elements of London speech, and why were they what they were?

The original Southern or Saxon character, with a definite admixture of S.E. or Kentish features, was determined partly by historical and political factors, partly also by geographical situation.

If we consider the facts of the O.E. period, we shall note that almost everything we possess in the language before the Norman period, everything at any rate deserving the name of Literature, practically everything that is not a mere gloss or a Charter has come down to us either in W. Saxon pure and simple, or in a dialect of this. In some cases we have what Bülbring calls the 'Saxon Patois', a definite type it is true, but one which is closer to W. Saxon than to any other form of English. If we think of the great bulk of O.E. poetry, while in most cases non-W.S. forms occur with more or less frequency, the prevailing type on the whole is W. Saxon, and the other elements either singly or collectively are relatively unimportant. It is open to question in some cases whether the mixed dialect exhibited by the texts is to be put down chiefly to the scribes mingling their own dialect with that which they copied, or whether in some areas a mixed dialect was not actually spoken, or at least used for literary purposes (see on this point Max Förster, *Festschrift für Morsbach*, pp. 32–5). The point of all this is that from the time of Alfred, throughout the O.E. period, owing to the political supremacy of Wessex, a type of English which is virtually West Saxon was used, in documents, far and wide in the South and Midlands, East and West. Alfred, while he extended his political sway over England, gave the country also a new culture which had its centre and starting-point in his own kingdom. It was natural that the good king's own dialect should be the vehicle of that culture which his own writings promoted. Thus there really was an O.E. literary κοινή or general form of English, and this form was used in London, no less than in Winchester. It is impossible in the present state of our knowledge to say how wide was the territory over which this dialect was actually spoken, but we cannot doubt that it included London which Alfred himself subdued.

After the Conquest, the literary tradition was lost, and therefore the dialects reappear once more in literature. It is

probably safe to conclude that if, in the Transition, and Early M.E. period, we find a written form of English which is approximately a continuation of the W.S. type, then this form was also actually spoken in the area from which the work which exhibits it emanates. There is a striking continuity in the dialectal type of the series of documents written in London, which extends over a period of 300 years, from the Conqueror's Charters to Davie's Poems, and it is hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that all these documents really represent the spoken language of the capital.

To show the Southern, or as we are inclined to say, West Saxon character of the London dialect down to the first quarter of the fourteenth century, we may enumerate a few characteristics shown by the sources in question. The reader should refer in each case to the sections in this book dealing with the various M.E. peculiarities enumerated. (See also the summary given by Dölle, pp. 82–8, from which the following table is taken.)

§ 369. Purely Southern Features in Early London Documents.

(1) (*a*) O.E. *æ̆* preserved, first as *æ* then as *e*: *þæt*, *fæder*, *wes*, *hebbe*. (*ă* after middle of fourteenth century.)

(*b*) W.S. *ǣ* > *ā* preserved: *wǣran*, *mæġes*, *ræderman*; Davie rhymes *ǣ* with O.E. *ēa*, showing [ɛ̄] sound.

(2) O.E. *eall-*, *eal* + consonant: *ealle*, *gehealde*, *bihelde*.

(3) O.E. diphthongs *ea*, *ie*, after front consonant: *ġeaf*, *forġifan*, *ġiun*; *shilde* (W.S. *sċield*) occurs as late as Davy.

(4) O.E. *ĕ̄a-i* (W.S. *ĭ̄e*, *y̆̄*): *yrf-*, *ġyrde*; *alysednesse*.

(5) O.E. *iu-i* (W.S. *ĭ̄e*, *ȳ*): *wurðe* (*wierðe*); *scytt* (> *sċīett*).

(6) Pres. Part. in *-inde*: *ilestinde*.

(7) Pres. Pl. in *-eþ*: *habbeþ*, *willaþ*, *willeþ*, *bēōþ*. (The Midl. *-en* predominates from 1250 onwards.)

The facts establish the survival of the original Southern character of the London dialect, down to the middle of the fourteenth century, beyond controversy.

Of the features in the Pre-Chaucerian London Dialect which are departures from Sthn., or at least from S.W. usage, some are clearly S.E. or Kentish elements; others might be either Anglian or Kentish, and some can only be considered definitely Midland or Anglian.

§ 370. Specifically S.E. or Kentish Features.

(1) *y̆̄* for O.E. *y̆̄*: *berig*; *kēpe*.

(2) *-æn-* for *-en-*: *ænglisc*; *frænċisċ*.
(3) *-ia, ie, -io* for *ēo*: *piofes*; *thiafes*; *bīon, bīen* (Davie).

§ 371. Features which may be either Kentish or Midland.

(1) *ē* for W.S. *ǣ*[1]. The M.E. representative of this sound [ɛ̄] is written *æ* in the earliest sources, and as late as the Proclamation (1258). After this *e* is written, which in itself leaves the sound uncertain. Davie's rhymes generally point to the W.S. [ɛ̄]-type, but in one case he appears to rhyme *drēde* with *mēde* 'meed, mood' (Dölle, p. 30).

This is the beginning of the introduction, on a large scale, of the non-W.S. [ē]-type. Chaucer has both types in a large number of words, as is shown by the rhymes; in many others only [ɛ̄], and in a few only [ē].

(2) *ē* as *i*-mutation of O.E. *ēa* (W.S. *īe, ī, ȳ*): this is found first in fourteenth-century *hēre* 'hear', *stēl* 'steel'; both in Davie.

(3) Absence of diphthonging after front consonant: W.S. *ġiefan, ġieldan* appear in M.E. as *ȝiuen*, etc.; non-W.S. *ġefan, ġeldan* as *ȝeuen, ȝelden*. For examples of former see above, § 369, no. (3). The latter type is found as early as twelfth century and also in Davie. These forms might be either Kentish, or from the famous 'Saxon Patois'; they are therefore not necessarily Anglian.

§ 372. Specifically Midland Features.

(1) *ă* for O.E. *ă̆* (see § 159). Apart from *habbe* which occurs already in O.E., we find *æ* or *e* down to the beginning of fourteenth century, when *a* comes in *þat, after, was, what*, etc.

(2) *ō* instead of *ēa* or *ē* before *-ld*, etc. Dölle gives no examples of this even from Davie, but in the next generation, Morsbach's Charters, etc., and Chaucer, *ōld, hōlden*, O.E. (Angl.) *āld, hāldan*, etc., are the only forms in Chaucer, except *wēlden* 'to wield' (W.S. *wēāldan*), a form which we still retain, *hēlden* 'hold' (twice), and *to beheldе* 'behold'. These three forms only occur in the poetry (cp. Frieshammer, p. 34).

(3) Ending *-en* in Pres. Indic. Pl. By the side of Sthn. *-eþ, -en* predominates from the middle of thirteenth century.

§ 373. The Early London Sources compared with Chaucer and with Later London Charters.

These differences and agreements are briefly but clearly summarized by Dölle, ch. v.

We may note the following points showing progressive Midland or other non-Sthn. influence:

(1) Tense [ē] for O.E. *æ*, W.Gmc. *ā*, far commoner in Chaucer than in the early sources.

(2) O.E. *āld* (Angl.) type practically universal in Chaucer (cp. § 166), and entirely so in Morsbach's documents.

(3) O.E. *hie* 'they' preserved in all the Early Lond. texts; Chaucer only *they*.

The oblique case always *hcom* in the Early texts, *hem* in Chaucer; in the later Records *hem* by the side of frequent *them*, etc. (§ 301).

(4) Pres. Indic. Pl. *-eþ*, preserved by the side of Midl. *-en*, *-e* in the early and late London Ch. and Records. Chaucer generally has *-en* (*-e*) both in prose and verse, but occasionally *-eth*. This ending is, however, rare (Frieshammer, p. 96).

§ 374. There are certain differences between the language of Chaucer's Poetry and that of his Prose. The former is rather more archaic, and shows more Kentish and purely Southern elements (Frieshammer, pp. 126–7).

The Prose of Chaucer is closer to the language of the later London Records (Morsbach). These are rather later than Chaucer, and most of the differences may be put down to this fact. It may be noted that O.E. *y* (*u-i*) is almost exclusively *i* or *y* in Chaucer's Prose, whereas in the Records *e* and *u* are comparatively frequent (Frieshammer, pp. 127–8).

We may take it that Chaucer spoke and wrote the best type of London English of his time, that spoken at Court, and that this form of speech is best represented in his prose. In his poetry he uses a more archaic type, which is therefore richer in purely Southern and Kentish elements. These elements were also useful to fall back upon for the purposes of his rhymes.

§ 375. The Spread of the London Type in the Fifteenth Century.

As we have seen in the Chapter on M.E. sounds, and in that on Inflexions, there was throughout the M.E. period, a

greet diversitee
In English and in wryting of our tonge.

In the written documents of the fifteenth century, however, especially in private and public official documents, this 'diversitee' becomes gradually less apparent. It must not be supposed that this implies that the language was becoming more uniform. Not a whit. The diversity persisted in common Speech, but more and more the London type came into use over an ever increasing area. We have it on Caxton's own

authority, that in his day a common standard of Spoken English did not exist, and that people still spoke their own dialects (see Morsbach, *Schriftspr.*, pp. 169, 170). He tells us that he was puzzled what form to adopt in his translations. He received conflicting suggestions as to what he ought to do. 'And som honest and grete clerkes haue ben wyth me, and desired me to wryte the most curyous termes that I coude fynde.' Again, there were 'some gentylmen whiche late blamed me, sayeng y^{t} in my translacyons I had ouer curyous termes, which coud not be understonde of comyn peple, and desired me to use olde and homely termes in my translacyons'. By 'olde and homely termes' Caxton apparently means the forms of some rustic dialect, which was foreign to him. 'That comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth from a nother.' Thus it was of no use to employ a Regional Dialect which would be strange to all living outside the area where it was spoken. It is not quite clear what is meant by 'ouer curyous termes', unless he refers to learned words which were not current anywhere in colloquial speech. He goes on to say—'and thus betwene playne, and rude and curyous termes, I stand abasshed; but in my Judgemente, the comyn termes that be dayli vesd ben lyghter to be vnderstonde than the olde an auncyent englysshe'. This Morsbach takes to mean, and the explanation is evidently right, that Caxton avoided deliberately words and forms peculiar to any given Regional Dialect, or rather, he chose the only dialect which was at least known in its written form over a wide area, that of London, a form of English which, as he says, 'had already become the common property of many'. Caxton makes the interesting statement: 'And certeynly the langage now vsed varyeth ferre from that whiche was vsed and spoken whan I was borne'. These words may record more than a change come about in the ordinary course of evolution in language; they may refer to the shifting of the type in London speech, away from Southern towards the Midland form—the elimination more and more of the former, and adoption proportionally of elements from the latter.

It is certain that the Standard was very far from fixed in Caxton's time, and we can observe an ebb and flow in the dialect of literary works for more than a hundred years after his time.

§ 376. Dialect Constituents of Caxton's English.

Specially Kentish or S.E.

Of these there appear to be none apart from the forms in *ē*

and *ĕ* representing O.E. *ȳ* (*u*—*i*). There is a certain number of these, which is not surprising as Caxton was a Kentishman; there are fewer than in Chaucer's Poetry, though more than in his Prose, where *i* is almost universal (cp. Römstedt, pp. 13, 14, 20; Frieshammer, pp. 30, 31; ten Brink, pp. 12, 18). Caxton has only *kene* 'cows', representing the long *ē* of this origin, but a not inconsiderable list of words with *ĕ*, some of which have now [i] in Standard Engl.: *kechyn*, *besy*, *pelow*. *Euyl* 'evil' is to be differently explained according to Luick (§ 229, Note).

Southern features in Caxton.

This element is on the wane in Caxton (Römstedt, p. 52). A few cases of Pres. Indic. and Imperat. Pl. in *-eth* still survive. The prefix *y-* still used occasionally.

Midland features.

(1) The old distinction between S. and Pl. in the Pret. of Strong Verbs of Classes 1, 3, 4, 5 survived longer in the Sth. than in the Nth. In the latter, the vowel of the Sing. is used also in the Pl. The originally Nth. habit invades the Midl. also and is found commonly in Caxton.

(2) The use of *their*, *them* (*theim*), more commonly than the old native forms *her*, *hem*.

(3) The Pres. Pl. Indic. has most commonly the Midl. ending *-en* (*-e*), rather than the rarer Sthn. *-eth*.

(4) *Ar* commoner than *ben* in Pres. Indic. Pl. of Substantive Verb. Chaucer has usually *been* in Prose and Verse, and very rarely *ar(e)n*.

§ 377. The Literary Language in the Fifteenth Century.

In considering the development and fixing of a particular type of English as the single vehicle of literature, two aspects of the question have to be borne in mind. On the one hand there is the actual development of the London Dialect itself, in its literary form. We have seen that this contains various dialectal elements, and that the relative proportion of these is not constant. The tendency during the fifteenth century is towards unification. The double forms of the same word, belonging now to this dialectal type, now to that, so characteristic of the earlier London documents, of Davie, and of Chaucer, are less frequent in the fifteenth-century Charters and in Caxton. The language is slowly settling down to a definite type, more or less fixed so far as the nature of its dialectal constituents is concerned.

On the other hand, we must remember the spread of the London Dialect beyond the original area. In Bokenam, Lydgate, Hoccleve, Capgrave, we find a more definitely E. Midl. character than in the language of Chaucer—Bokenam indeed clearly states that he writes in the Suffolk dialect. Again, in Wycliffe, and more than half a century later, in Pecock, a slightly different type still is exhibited. The question arises whether this, the 'Oxford type', has not in its turn influenced the literary language of London as found in Caxton. This was answered in the affirmative by Dibelius, *Anglia*, xxiv, pp. 302–7 and elsewhere, who claims to have found marked traces of Oxford influence in Caxton, and certain features in the Standard English of to-day (e. g. [*iz*] etc. in unstressed syllables—[*hauziz*], etc.; *fought, found* (Pret.) with vowel of P.P.), which cannot be explained except by assuming this influence. This view has, however, been rejected by subsequent investigators of the origin of Literary English—Lekebusch, Frieshammer, and quite recently by Luick, *Hist. Gr.*, p. 53.

The so-called 'Oxford' features are shown to belong to London English as found in the Prose of Chaucer and in the later London Charters, and this type has therefore not contributed to the development of Literary English. Lekebusch (p. 144) asks with some point how exactly Caxton underwent Oxford influence, since he never set foot in that city. It can hardly be supposed that he procured Oxford MSS. and used them as models.

In spite of the varieties which undoubtedly do exist in the language displayed by the English writers of the fifteenth, and even, to some extent, throughout the sixteenth century, it is fair to say that on the whole there is a definite attempt at conformity with a single type; the differences are, for the most part, in scattered forms, and do not involve whole classes of words, or grammatical categories. The differences that we remark between the English of to-day and that of Hoccleve and Lydgate, of Pecock and Caxton, of Skelton and Lord Berners, of Tyndale and Sir Thomas More, of Surrey, Wyatt, and Elyot, of Udall, Sackville, Ascham, Latimer, Lyly, and their contemporaries, are very largely differences of structure and phrase, quaintnesses and archaisms of word and expression rather than vital disparities of dialect. The language of Caxton and his immediate followers is, to all intents and purposes, the ancestor of our present English, apart from the scattered and isolated differences to which reference has been made.

§ 378. Occasional Dialectal Lapses in Sixteenth-Century English.

It may be worth while to illustrate these from a few of the better known writers. It may be noted that in some cases the writer hesitates between two forms, using sometimes that which is the ancestor of our Present-day type, sometimes another form; in other cases the type systematically used is different from that which subsequently became fixed.

I begin with **Lord Berners's** *Froissart* (1523). We may read whole pages of this remarkable work without feeling more than a slight archaism of expression. It is essentially Modern English, simple, dignified, stately, and yet effective and expressive. We find: *than*, *whan* 'then, when', *cam* 'came', *nat* 'not', *remeued* 'removed', *toguyder* 'together', *lese* 'lose', *strake* 'struck', *themselfe* (from *-selfen*), *thyder* 'thither', *wolle* 'will', *eyen* 'eyes', *yerthe* 'earth', *mo* adv. 'more', *thenglysshmen*. This list shows the most noteworthy divergences from present-day usage in about 9½ pp. given by Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii.

Tyndale (1528), from the *Obedience of a Christian Man*, Skeat, iii, pp. 167–79. *Redles* 'riddles' (cp. § 231, on vowel of *riddle*), *steke* 'stick', *childerne*; *geve* 'give' inf., *geven* p.p., *mo*, *vnderstonde* (*o* instead of *a*), *awne* 'own' adj., *then* 'than', *sherch* 'search', *deades* 'deeds' (apparently Saxon *æ*-type, and not the Kt. or Anglian *ē*, §§ 161 and 162), *fettethe* 'fetches', O.E. *fetian*; *auctor* 'author', *enches* 'inches', *all maner doctours*, instead of 'all manner of', *whome* 'home' adv. (cp. § 240, Note 2, on *wone* for *one* [wan]), *Devinite* 'divinity', also *dyvinite*. Apart from these few exceptions, the whole passage reads like present-day English.

Sir Thomas More's *Dialogue concerning Hereseyes* (1528), Skeat's *Specimens*, iii, pp. 181–93. *Founden* p.p., *euery* (used as noun) 'oute of euery of those tonges', *lyen* 'lain' p.p., *whan* 'when', *furth* 'forth', *than* 'then', *forboden* 'forbidden', *begonne* 'begun', *sprongen* p.p., *expowned* 'expounded', *forbare* 'forbore' pret., *hable* 'able', *christen* 'Christian', *prent* 'print' noun, *geue* 'give' inf., *hole* and *whole* 'whole' (two distinct types, as in Tyndale's *whome* compared with our *home*, cp. § 240, Note 2), *forgeue*, 'forgive', *pistle* 'epistle'.—From Sir T. More's *Confutacion of Tyndale's answer* (1532). *The tone*, *the tother*, *giue*, but see *geue* above. More distinguishes between *nay* and *no*, the former being used in answer to a question framed in the affirmative, the latter to one in the negative. He makes a similar distinction between *ye*(*a*) and *yes*.

From **Sir Thomas Elyot's** *Gouernour* (1531), Skeat's *Specimens*, iii, pp. 195–204. *Wrastlyng* 'wrestling', *strenger* 'stronger', *lenger* 'longer' (cp. § 321), *mought* 'might', *warke* 'work' noun, *renne* 'run' inf., *rennyng* participle, *renner* 'runner', *ferre* 'far, distant', *the ryuer of Tyber*, *aferde* 'afraid', adv. *whan*, *faughte* pret. 'fought' (from O.E. *fæht*, M.E. *faht*, *fauht*, not the ancestor of our *fought* which is from p.p. type, O.E. *foht-en*, M.E. *fouht*), *warse* 'worse', *domage* 'damage', *harborowe* vb. 'harbour', *gyue* inf., *gyuen* p.p. (cp. *geue* above and below, in contemporary writings), *sens* 'since', *disporte of hauking* 'sport . . .', *kepeth* Pres. Indic. Pl.

Edward VI's First Prayer Book (1549). We should expect, in such a work, to find the purest, and most authoritative form of English, but even here, in spite of the great beauties of the style, there are a certain number of words which exhibit dialectal types that have quite disappeared from the language of literature. This book, so important and interesting in a dozen ways, has not yet received the attention it deserves from the linguistic point of view. I can only give here a few of the most marked peculiarities in which it differs from the English of to-day. *Geue*, *forgeue*, *geuen* (very frequent, the only forms; never *giue*, etc.), *yer* 'ere', *yearth* 'earth' (ten examples counted, apparently the only form), *weomen* Pl. of *woman* (this form shows the change in first syll. which we make in speech, but do not express in spelling), *brent sacrifice*, *sprong* pret. of *spring* (also *sprang*), *ouercomed* p.p., *wiues*, Possess. Sing., Present-day [waifs], *childers children* 'children's children'.

Bp. Latimer's Sermons (1549). I follow Arber's Reprint of all the Sermons.

Geue inf., *geuen* p.p. (very frequent, *giue* less frequently); the 3rd Sing. Pres. Indic. generally ends in *-eth*, also in *-es*; sometimes both forms occur in the same sentence, e.g. 'he ror*es* and go*th* about'; *furder* 'further'; 'great reformation*s* *is* to be had'; '*they* that kep*eth*' (Sthn. Pl.), *mo* adv., *sence* 'since', *whomlye* 'homely', also *wone* 'one', *then* 'than', *stack* vb., pret. of *stick*, *thether* 'thither', *ye diuel* 'the devil', *whirry* 'wherry', *fetteth* 'fetches', *byles* noun 'boils', 'whatsoever ye shall *axe* in my name'. These discourses make no pretensions to high literary polish. They are colloquial in style, vigorous and racy, and perhaps, even by some of those who heard them, were felt to be too homely and lacking in dignity of style for the discourses of a bishop who was addressing his king. Latimer may not be responsible for all

the curiosities of phrase and form in the version which has come down to us. Such expressions as *knockes hym on the head, cocke sure, vpskippes* 'upstarts', *the diuel and al, tost from post to piller*, and many others of the same kind are clearly taken from the familiar speech of everyday life.

Turning to **Lily's Euphues** (1581) we come to a very different style. The effort throughout is evidently to produce something of very high quality. Every phrase is carefully wrought, polished, and balanced; there is a painful striving for what later writers would call the *mot juste*, though the choice is perhaps often determined more by the exigencies of alliteration than by any very nice and fastidious feeling for shades of meaning.

The book strikes us now as rather intolerable by reason of its sententiousness, and artificiality of style, but it was thought a model of elegance and wisdom in its day; it set a fashion and founded a school. We may therefore be sure that there is no negligence on the part of the writer, and that where double forms are found, or forms which belong to a dialectal type now discarded, these arise from the still unsettled state of Literary English at the time. I follow Arber's Reprint, and the following list represents most of the chief points of the kind we are considering throughout both parts of the work. *To strick* 'strike', *elder* as comp. of *old*, *anyes* (Possessive case, used as a noun), *scrich* 'shriek', *I writ* pret., *doth* as Pl.—'pleasaunt sirroppes *doth* chiefliest infecte a delicate taste'; *retchles* 'reckless', *dronken* (Note artificial learned spellings such as *accompted, contempned*); *wan* pret. Sing. 'won', *hether* 'hither', *chekin* 'chicken'; 'the Rauen cherisheth hir *byrdes*', where the last word is used in old sense of O.E. *briddas* 'young birds'; Pres. Pl. in *-en—loaden*; *stroken* p.p. of *strike*, here equivalent to 'stricken', *diuells*, *leese* 'lose', *hard* 'heard' pret., *hoate* (unshortened form, cp. § 243 above) 'hot'.

These examples from some of the great sixteenth-century writers are enough to illustrate the point from which we started, that even in the most impressive and solemn form of literature authors could still hesitate and vary their use in the choice of forms. The work of unification was not complete; the Regional, or Class Dialect of the individual still found occasional utterance in his literary style, just as it does at the present day in the Spoken Language. As spelling was not yet so rigidly fixed as at present, the sixteenth-century writer might even betray a dialect pronunciation that was a comparatively slight variant, by his orthography. Of this,

Tyndale's *deades* is probably an example. At the present time, many persons whose style is unimpeachable, and who naturally follow the received spelling, may nevertheless habitually exhibit in their speech all the stigmata of a Scotch, Yorkshire, or Lancashire accent, or the worst features of Cockneyism, and yet never betray themselves in their writings. But apart from the temptation of the sixteenth-century writer to lapse into provincialisms, and to express these in his spelling, there was the fact that he had less than a century of printing behind him. The eyes of reader and writer alike were still accustomed to a certain variety, even in the printed book, and men were not yet trained to think of words as of unvarying groups of letters. Thus any type of form which could be heard among educated persons in conversation might also be represented in the written word. The common sixteenth-century spelling *geue* merely expresses what was still the more habitual form. *Give* was coming in, and no doubt would call forth no comment, but *geve*, to judge by the writers of this period, was the usual form. The Orthoepists of the sixteenth century indicate the pronunciation [gīv].

§ 379. Later Dialectal Influence upon Standard English.

This problem belongs rather to the history of the Spoken Language than that of the Literary form. Reference has been already made to this in the chapter on English Pronunciation in the Modern Period.

There is an inconsiderable number of words in Present-day English, whose pronunciation presents certain difficulties, judged from the standpoint of the usual sound changes of Received Standard. Luick (*Unters. z. engl. Lautgesch.*, pp. 312, etc.) enumerates the forms of this kind which have come in since the middle of the seventeenth century. They do not amount to very much when all is said and done. *Broad*, *bought*, *brought* are supposed to owe their vowel [ɔ̄] to the dialects of the South-West. The forms of *one*, *once* [wan, wans] are supposed to come from the same area. (See § 242, Note 2, on the slow introduction of these forms into polite English.) *Key* with [ī] appears in the second half of the seventeenth century, and comes, it is said, from W. Midl. area. The vowel in *break*, *steak*, *yea*, [ē] instead of [ī], came into Received Standard in the first half of the eighteenth century, from the South-West.

Coming down to our own times, various changes in isolated words have come in during the last century—one type has been given up, and another adopted as the Received form.

A few examples of these must suffice. [kwæl*i*t*i*, kwænt*i*t*i*, gūld, ā^{r}b] etc., have been replaced by [kwɔl*i*t*i*, kwɔnt*i*t*i*, gould, hāb], and there are many other instances of the same kind of thing. The termination *-ing* is now very commonly pronounced [*i*ŋ] instead of the old-fashioned [*i*n].

Other more recent examples still of an alteration in pronunciation, not due to ordinary Sound Change, but to substitution of one type for another, are given in my article, 'Class Dialect and Standard English,' *Mackay Misc.*, pp. 283–91, and it is there suggested that we have here the result of social conditions, which have brought into prominence and importance sections of the population who at an earlier period were unable to affect Standard English. It is suggested further, that many alterations in English during the last hundred years show the influence, not of *Regional* or Local Dialect, but of *Class* Dialect, that is, the influence of *Modified Standard* upon *Received Standard*. This whole question has hardly been discussed at present, but it is not too much to say that the variants of Standard English which now exist, and have long existed among different social divisions, must, with the changing social conditions of the present day, profoundly affect the future of *Received Standard*. It is further urged that the same thing has happened in the past, and that possibly some of the seventeenth and eighteenth century varieties, mentioned by the writers on pronunciation of that time, may be accounted for by assuming that the variants represented the forms used in various *Class Dialects*, rather than in *Regional Dialects*.

The terms *Received Standard* for the 'best' type of Spoken English, usually known hitherto as *Standard English*, and *Modified Standard* for the various vulgar forms of this heard among the inferior ranks of the population, were proposed by me in 'Standard English and its Varieties,' *Mod. Lang. Teaching*, Dec. 1913, pp. 1–16.

It seems probable that the influence of *Modified Standard*, that is, of forms of English differentiated out of *Received Standard* by factors of social isolation, will have to be admitted and studied in the future, more than has hitherto been the case, if we are to understand the tendencies which arise in Spoken English, at different periods, affecting now whole classes of words, now only individual words. These alterations in speech habit appear to be often of the nature of fashion, but they have deeper causes which spring from the complex and stereoscopic conditions of modern society.

The problem of the rise of the Literary Dialect, and of

Received Standard Spoken English, is one which now bulks large in the minds of students. Much yet remains to be done. We want a more minute knowledge than we at present possess of the dialectal conditions in M.E., and one which perhaps will hardly be attained primarily from the texts of that period, whose place of origin is often largely conjectural. New light will probably come from the systematic study of the phonology of the M.E. forms of Place Names. Next we want a far minuter and more exhaustive knowledge of the language of all the fifteenth and sixteenth-century non-dialectal writers. This work has been splendidly begun by Dibelius, in particular, and by other writers mentioned in the course of this book. Then we want many monographs upon Present-day Spoken English; on the one hand of the rapidly disappearing Regional Dialects, and on the other of the ever increasing number of types of Modified Standard, or Class Dialects. The latter study is hardly begun. It should be carried out both in respect of certain well-marked social boundaries, and also within these, with a view to geographical diffusion, and possible new differentiation. As regards the study of Regional Dialects, the real foundations have yet to be laid. At present we can hardly connect any features of these forms of English with their predecessors in the M.E. period. We often do not know the historical relation, if such exists, between apparently identical developments in widely separated dialects. Many of these apparent connexions are illusory, but we know so little of the past of the living dialects, that we are unable in many cases to identify the genuine Regional elements from other features which may have come, at no very remote date, from some form of Standard English.

The field of investigation for the future student of English is a vast and fruitful one. Much of it is still absolutely unbroken. It must be said, in common fairness, that German and Scandinavian scholars have hitherto done most of the work. A glance at the Bibliography at the beginning of this book shows how much we owe in the way of special investigations to our foreign friends. It may sound paradoxical, but it is true that the first and most necessary preparation for the modern study of the history of the English Language is a knowledge of German. As a fitting close to this little text-book, I venture to express the modest hope that in the near future a larger number of Englishmen may be willing to add something to our knowledge of the history of the English Language.

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